

when the House adjourns today on a motion offered pursuant to this order, it adjourn to meet at 1 p.m. on Monday, March 30, 2015, unless it sooner has received a message from the Senate transmitting its concurrence in H. Con. Res. 31, in which case the House shall stand adjourned pursuant to that concurrent resolution.

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

There was no objection.

APPOINTMENT OF INDIVIDUALS TO COMMISSION TO STUDY THE POTENTIAL CREATION OF A NATIONAL WOMEN'S HISTORY MUSEUM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair announces the Speaker's appointment, pursuant to section 3056 of the Carl Levin and Howard P. "Buck" McKeon National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2015 (Public Law 113-291), and the order of the House of January 6, 2015, of the following individuals on the part of the House to the Commission to Study the Potential Creation of a National Women's History Museum:

Mrs. Kathy Wills Wright, Arlington, Virginia

The Honorable Marilyn Musgrave, Fort Morgan, Colorado

APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO BOARD OF REGENTS OF THE SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair announces the Speaker's appointment, pursuant to sections 5580 and 5581 of the revised statutes (20 U.S.C. 42-43), and the order of the House of January 6, 2015, of the following Members on the part of the House to the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution:

Mr. SAM JOHNSON, Texas

Mr. COLE, Oklahoma

APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO BRITISH-AMERICAN INTER-PARLIAMENTARY GROUP

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair announces the Speaker's appointment, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2761, and the order of the House of January 6, 2015, of the following Members on the part of the House to the British-American Interparliamentary Group:

Mr. CRENSHAW, Florida, Chairman

Mr. LATTA, Ohio

Mr. ADERHOLT, Alabama

Mr. HOLDING, North Carolina

Mr. WHITFIELD, Kentucky

Mr. ROE, Tennessee

EXPRESSING GRATITUDE FOR THE HONOR TO SERVE THE 18TH DISTRICT OF ILLINOIS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of Jan-

uary 6, 2015, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. SCHOCK) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. SCHOCK. Mr. Speaker, 6 years ago, I entered this Chamber and raised my right arm to take the oath of office as a Member of the United States House of Representatives. I remember feeling so excited about the opportunity that lay ahead. I remember vividly this Chamber and all that it meant to me and to the country: the men and women debating the big issues of the day, not always agreeing, but always fighting without apology for what they believe in.

Over the past 6 years, I have come to understand that this institution is far bigger than any one person, and that freedom itself is even more important than this institution. Some of the world's greatest debates have occurred right here in this Chamber, for what happens here affects more than just the people of my district or even my country.

Over those 6 years, I have done my best to contribute constructively to the process and to serve the people of my district and my country. My guiding principle has always been rooted in the belief that Washington should only do what people cannot do for themselves.

I fought and opposed the billion-dollar surplus bill, the government takeover of our health care, and the massive new regulations put on small businesses. But, more importantly, I fought for the people of my district so that their voice would be heard and respected by my colleagues, for I heard that voice in every vote that I have cast.

But I also knew that being in the majority was key to making a difference. So I am proud of the work I have done to contribute to a Republican majority here in Congress—to begin to scale back the overreaches of a bloated Federal Government and to begin to bend the curve on out-of-control spending. That has only happened because of a Republican majority, and I am proud to have played a role in building it.

During this time, I saw how slow the Federal Government can be and how frustrating Congress can get, but I also learned that one man can make a difference. Working with my Republican colleagues and across the aisle with my Democrat friends, we have been able to pass legislation that helped businesses across America create millions of jobs. Some of them have been located in my home district, but many more across this great country. There was, is, and will be so much to do, and I am honored to have played a small part in making a real difference.

But these accomplishments come with some frustrations as well, that this body doesn't move quickly enough or as efficiently as it could to confront the challenges facing our country. I regret that I won't be here when we finally pass a smarter, simpler Tax Code

so that every hard-working taxpayer in my district and across the country will know that Washington not only cares about them, but respects them and their sacrifice. And I will miss joining my colleagues in saving and strengthening Social Security and Medicare that will directly improve the quality of life for millions of Americans for generations to come.

To my constituents back home, the good, hard-working taxpayers whom I have been lucky enough to call friends, I will never be able to thank you enough for the opportunity you have given me to serve. Together we have tackled some of the big problems at home, like economic development projects, helping businesses expand, improving our locks and dams along our riverways, and so much more, projects that have helped improve the quality of life in our community.

We have also tackled some small problems, but big problems to the people who have been facing them—folks looking for help adopting children overseas or simply trying to get answers from an unresponsive bureaucracy here in D.C. Solving those individual cases has been extremely fulfilling.

I am particularly grateful to have played a role in helping so many veterans get the respect they deserve and the benefits that they earned.

I am proud of the good work that my team has delivered to the tens of thousands of constituents who have turned to our office in their time in need. My staff delivered for me because they delivered for you every day, 24/7.

I was never more excited than the day I walked into this Chamber 6 years ago. I leave here with sadness and humility. For those whom I have let down, I will work tirelessly to make it up to you.

I know that God has a plan for my life. The Good Book tells us that before I formed you in the womb, I knew you. I also know that every person faces adversity in life. Abraham Lincoln held this seat in Congress for one term, but few faced as many defeats in his personal, business, and public life as he did. His continual perseverance in the face of these trials, never giving up, is something all of us Americans should be inspired by, especially when going through a valley in life.

I believe that through life's struggles, we learn from our mistakes, and we learn more about ourselves. And I know that this is not the end of a story but, rather, the beginning of a new chapter.

Thank you for the honor to serve. I look forward to keeping in touch with my friends in this Chamber and my friends across the 18th District. May God continue to bless this awesome institution and the important role that it plays for America and the rest of the world.

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

BUDGET WEEK

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. WOODALL) is recognized for the remainder of the hour as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the time, and I would like to start our time tonight by yielding to my friend from Florida (Ms. WILSON).

WE BROUGHT BACK FIVE OF THE KIDNAPPED GIRLS

Ms. WILSON of Florida. Thank you, Representative WOODALL, for this honor and this pleasure. I am indebted to you forever. Thank you.

I just finished making a speech about Boko Haram and girls who were kidnapped in Nigeria. Five of them are in the gallery today, and I thought it not robbery to recognize them and ask you who are listening to please tweet #bringbackourgirls and tweet #joinrepwilson. These young ladies were kidnapped, and they had the courage—the courage—to come to America to continue their education. They are right there in the gallery.

Thank you, Representative WOODALL.

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, as you know, this is the conclusion of budget week here. I sit on the Budget Committee. I enjoy budget week. It is a statement of our values as a nation. Where you put your money is where you are putting your emphasis. A lot of folks don't want to put their money where their mouth is. We have a lot of mouths in this town. This is the week where everybody gets to put their money where their mouth is.

One of those issues that we have been struggling with has been the issue of transportation funding. I come from a very conservative district in Georgia, Mr. Speaker, and one of the counties—I only represent two—one of those counties, Forsyth County, just voted to tax itself with a \$200 million bond initiative to widen a highway. Because we are the fastest growing county in the State, we sit in traffic hour upon hour upon hour.

It is not that conservatives don't want to tax themselves. It is that conservatives don't want to tax themselves and then throw that money down a rat hole. If we can develop a trust that, if you tax a family a dollar that they will get a dollar's worth of services—needed services, desired services—for that dollar, we would have a very different relationship with the Federal Government.

□ 1245

Mr. Speaker, I have up here a reference to article I, section 8, clause 7 of the United States Constitution which says:

The Congress shall have the power to establish post offices and post roads.

Commerce, at the time of the writing of our Constitution, Mr. Speaker, took place through the post office and those post roads. There was an obligation

that our Founding Fathers recognized to develop routes of commerce so that goods could travel, so that messages could travel, so that people could travel.

I say that because too often the conversation in Washington devolves into: Should we spend money at all, or should we spend obscene amounts of it that we have to borrow from our children? That is not the conversation we are having. We have a constitutional obligation to maintain, establish and maintain the post roads, those corridors of commerce around this Nation. The Federal Government took that responsibility on in one of the great building projects of our history, building the Eisenhower Interstate Highway System.

I want to build things, Mr. Speaker. So often this Congress gets involved in doing things that my community is doing just fine back home, that my county is doing just fine back home, that my State is doing just fine back home. And for some reason we think when the 435 of us gather together, we are going to come up with a better idea about how to better serve my community back home than my community back home has about how to serve my community. I think we get off track there. I think we get into those unconstitutional uses of power. Establishing post roads—one of those things our Founding Fathers asked the government to do, because, quite simply, no one else can build an interstate highway system. It does no good for Georgia to have 12 lanes running to the Alabama border if Alabama doesn't have a road when we get there. This is a collaborative decision, and rightfully so.

So how do we fund these highways, Mr. Speaker? We fund them primarily through what is called the highway trust fund, and the highway trust fund is funded through taxes on users of the highway system. I am a huge fan of user fees. If you don't like to sit in traffic every morning, if you want to build an extra lane on your highway, as we are in Forsyth County, you should pay to build that extra lane on your highway. You shouldn't ask somebody in Wyoming to pay to build the road in Georgia. We should build the road in Georgia. Users of the roads should pay for the roads. So that is what we do.

What you can't see here, Mr. Speaker, is a graph of how the highway trust fund is funded. Primarily, it is through a gas tax. It is 18.4 cents that comes out of every gallon of gas that Americans buy. That gas tax is primarily the funding mechanism.

But we also tax diesel, so all the truckers who are on the road, every time you are driving down that two-lane highway and you wish the guy in front of you was going a little bit faster, just know that he is paying a lot in taxes while he is on that road. He is helping to build that road. Diesel taxes are higher than gasoline taxes, but because there are fewer diesel vehicles on the road, bring in less revenue.

We also have a tax on all trucks and trailers. We have a tax in this blue line on heavy vehicles, and we have a tax on tires. Again, all of these taxes come together not to tax one group of people to pay for another, but to tax users of our roads to pay for our roads. It has been a system that has served us fairly well in this Nation.

But we haven't raised that gas tax since the early 1990s. In the early 1990s, we set the gas tax at 18.4 cents a gallon, and we haven't raised it since. Mr. Speaker, I am not in favor of raising taxes. I am in favor of paying less taxes. I am in favor of taking on more of that responsibility back home.

But, again, in the case of post roads, we have to take on this responsibility. And the reason I am having this Special Order tonight, Mr. Speaker, is because the highway trust fund expires in May. We have about 2 months to sort out all of the challenges of how do we fund the Interstate Highway System going forward.

And for folks who say, Well, we have been funding it with an 18.4 cent gas tax for 25 years, why isn't that good enough today? the answer is, it may be, it may be good enough today. But understand that the buying power that we are getting out of that 18.4 cents has declined each and every year. Of course it has. The price of a Big Mac has gone up over the past 20 years, the price of a car has gone up over the past 20 years, the price of a home has gone up, the price of building roads has gone up, so the purchasing power that we are getting for our gas tax has gone down and down and down and down. Right now we are getting about 60 percent of the value out of that gas tax that we were getting when it was last changed in the early 1990s.

Now, what is the impact of that? Well, it is not just that the value of the purchasing power is going down; the mileage we are getting in our cars is going up.

My first car, Mr. Speaker—I don't know what your first car was—mine was a 1971 Volkswagen camper. I had 59 horsepower in the back of that camper to drive me anywhere I wanted to go. If I coasted downhill and only used the accelerator a little bit uphill, I would max out about 35 miles an hour. But I could get 14 miles a gallon if I tried. If I tried to drive that camper as efficiently as I could, I could get 14 miles to the gallon.

Today, Mr. Speaker, I am driving a Chevy Volt. Most of my driving is free. It is coming off the battery. I am not paying any gas taxes at all. When I do have to turn on the electric generator in that Chevy Volt, I am getting 40 miles to the gallon. Just in my lifetime, the fuel efficiency is either triple, based on an engine, or no gas tax at all because I am using electricity.

This is what has happened. You go back to 1975, Mr. Speaker, this is the average miles per gallon that passenger cars and light trucks were getting. You get into the last half of the last decade,