

of the government cannot pass an audit is unacceptable, let alone a department that spends more than \$600 billion annually. That is, frankly, outrageous. I bet you the Department of Housing and Urban Development can't get away with this.

Now, I am a former small-business owner, 11 years, and I can tell you one thing. I know the importance of having one's books in order. Whether it is in the private sector or the public sector, it is critical to success. In fact, we all demand that all individuals, families, organizations, and companies be able to pass an audit. Why in the world should the Pentagon be any different?

Taxpayers deserve better than black-box budgeting and two decades of "we will get on with this" rhetoric, and they keep postponing and saying "we will get to it later." That is unacceptable when it comes to ending waste, fraud, and abuse. I remember several years ago there were reports from The New York Times, and subsequently these reports were substantiated, that taxpayer dollars—cash money—in suitcases were being passed out in Afghanistan. What in the world are we doing? We have no clue where that money went or how much it was. It was cash money.

So we need to take this action, and I thank Mr. BURGESS and Ms. SCHAKOWSKY for this. If you ask me, I think we need to take bolder actions to address the Pentagon's failure to achieve audit-ready status and somehow at some point penalize them if they don't do that because we all would be penalized if in fact our books were not in order. So this amendment, I just have to say, is a major step in the right direction.

Mr. Chairman, the American people deserve to know how the Pentagon is spending their hard-earned tax dollars. We must end waste, fraud, and abuse at the Pentagon. We need to achieve audit-readiness. Once again, none of us could get away with this, none, no Federal agency could get away with this. So we must begin this process for accountability and transparency. It is important that the public know exactly how their money is being spent. There is no way the Pentagon should get away with this.

So, Mr. Chairman, I urge a "yes" vote on this amendment because unauditability is unacceptable. I thank Mr. BURGESS, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Chairman, at this time, I yield 30 seconds to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. THORNBERRY), the chairman of the full committee.

Mr. THORNBERRY. Mr. Chairman, I support this amendment. I rise just to make two points. Number one, unfortunately, there are a lot of Federal agencies that can't pass an audit, and I hope that all the other committees of the Congress are as diligent as our committee is about making sure they get their agencies to where they can.

Our committee in particular, led by CPA Mr. CONAWAY of Texas, we have

pushed this issue, held many oversight hearings, and will continue to push this issue. I think the gentleman's amendment helps that effort. But I want to be really clear that this is a high priority of the committee, and it needs to be a high priority for the other departments besides the Department of Defense as well.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Chairman, at this point I am prepared to yield back, but I do want to thank the chairman of the full committee for hearing our amendment this evening. I also want to thank him for what I know is a significant amount of work and challenge to get this bill to the floor.

Mr. Chairman, I look forward to its speedy passage tomorrow, and yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BURGESS).

The amendment was agreed to.

Mr. THORNBERRY. Mr. Chairman, I move that the Committee do now rise.

The motion was agreed to.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. LOUDERMILK) having assumed the chair, Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, Acting Chair of the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H. R. 1735) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes, had come to no resolution thereon.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess for a period of less than 15 minutes.

Accordingly (at 9 o'clock and 28 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 2135

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. LOUDERMILK) at 9 o'clock and 35 minutes p.m.

TRIBUTE TO NEVADA SENATOR HOWARD CANNON

(Ms. TITUS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. TITUS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of Nevada Senator Howard Cannon.

In 1982, I served as Senator Cannon's faculty intern; and every day, in my district office, I have the privilege of sitting behind his personal desk, loaned to me by his daughter Nancy Downey. It serves as a constant reminder of his many heroic acts. From delivering

paratroopers in the lead plane on D-Day to passionately advocating for Nevada's interests on the Senate floor, Howard Cannon's valor and courage are truly unmatched.

This June, Nancy will travel to France to cut the ribbon on the new extension of the D-Day Paratrooper Historical Center, which features her father's restored C-47, the "Stoy Hora," among other artifacts from the invasion. It is a fitting tribute to Senator Cannon and the brave men and women who risked or lost their lives so we can live in a safer world today.

The legacy of Howard Cannon cannot be summed up in 1 minute, Mr. Speaker, so I will now submit for the RECORD an article from the Las Vegas Review-Journal, titled: "Humble" Air Warrior Had Crucial D-Day Job: France to honor late Sen. Cannon.

[From the Las Vegas Review Journal: May 12, 2015]

"HUMBLE" AIR WARRIOR HAD CRUCIAL D-DAY JOB: FRANCE TO HONOR LATE SEN. CANNON, OTHERS FOR WWII ROLES

(By Keith Rogers)

Among the accomplishments of Nevada's late-Sen. Howard Cannon, from his 33-year political career to his Air Force Reserve service as a major general, his biggest achievement arguably was his role in delivering paratroopers in the lead plane during the June 6, 1944, D-Day invasion of Normandy, France.

With mental toughness and steady hands, then-Maj. Cannon, co-pilot of the C-47 Skytrain "Stoy Hora," and pilot Col. Frank Krebs, commander of the 440th Troop Carrier Group, spearheaded the assault to free France from the grip of Nazi Germany's forces.

Had their plane and others in the 45-ship formation not made it to the drop zone near St. Mere Eglise, the soldiers of the 506th Parachute Infantry Regiment might never have been able to provide the cover and distraction for the massive troop landings on the Normandy coast that marked a turning point in World War II.

For that, the grand opening of the extension at the D-Day Paratroopers Historical Center featuring the restored C-47 "Stoy Hora," the pilot's log book and other artifacts will be held June 12 in Normandy's Saint-Come-du-Mont. A flight simulator with special effects will treat visitors to a simulated 7-minute flight inside the aircraft.

Cannon's daughter, Nancy Downey of Genoa, and Krebs' daughter, Christine Goyer, will cut the ribbon with Ethan Wolverton, great-grandson of Lt. Col. Robert Wolverton, commander of the 3rd Battalion's stick of paratroopers, who was killed by Germany machinegun fire while he dangled in his harness after his parachute caught on a tree.

"In our region, we feel that the pilots and crews have not been significantly recognized for their action on D-Day, and we are attempting to not forget them in our museum extension," event coordinator Michel de Trez wrote in Downey's invitation. "It is also our way to honor those who fought and died on the sector where we are located."

In a telephone interview from Minden last week, Downey said she is looking forward to seeing the C-47 her father flew 71 years ago.

"I think it's a great honor to be a pilot of something that's living history, to be a memorial to people like my dad who risked their lives and lost lives to help, not only France, but the world be a safer place," she

said, reflecting on her famous father, who died in 2002 at age 90.

"He was very humble and unassuming. He's been a tremendous inspiration to me my whole life," she said.

Clark County, too, has assembled some of Cannon's photographs and memorabilia for its Cannon Aviation Museum.

"Had we not had the paratroopers, it was highly likely the invasion would not have been successful," said Mark Hall-Patton, administrator of the Clark County Museum on Boulder Highway in Henderson.

"And to have somebody who later was the local DA and Nevada senator who was copilot of the lead plane is huge," he said.

"He was the one who, among other things, deregulated the airlines and played a key role in passage of the Civil Rights Act. He was a Democrat who was able to bring the Republicans in and get that passed for (President Lyndon B.) Johnson," Hall-Patton said.

After his death in 2002, a Review-Journal editorial recognized his political savvy. "The senator would never tell what deal President Lyndon Johnson offered him for his role in ending the Southern filibuster which would otherwise have prevented the Civil Rights Act from coming to a vote in 1964."

Cannon served 24 years as one of Nevada's U.S. senators, from 1959 to 1983. As a member of the Armed Services and Commerce, Science and Transportation committees and chairman of the Tactical Air Power, Military Construction and Stockpiles subcommittees, he helped secure funding and upgrades for Nellis Air Force Base.

Born in St. George, Utah, in 1912, he became intrigued by the budding aviation industry while attending Dixie Junior College in the 1930s.

"I admit I was more than just a little impressed by the glamour of flying in those days," he said in an interview for the December 1971 edition of Air Line Pilot magazine. "Lindbergh had recently made his epic ocean-crossing flight, and that added to the pilot mystique that dominated that era."

As a second lieutenant in the Utah National Guard, he was called to active duty in 1941 and promoted to first lieutenant in charge of a combat engineers unit. He was assigned to the 40th Division in San Luis Obispo, Calif., when Japanese warplanes attacked Pearl Harbor on Dec. 7, 1941. Responding to the need for experienced pilots, he joined the Army Air Corps and graduated from light aircraft and glider school in New Mexico as a captain.

In his biography that Downey helped him write, Cannon described the historic D-Day flight. "Anti-aircraft fire at us as we passed the Channel Islands but we were too low and out of range from them. . . . As we approached the target, we let down through the stuff and broke out at 700 feet over the green fields of France."

He saw one of the U.S. planes explode as his C-47 powered toward the drop zone. "Many positions firing tracers," he wrote. "Many of them had me flinching. Over target—green light—there go the troops. Time 0140 (1:40 a.m.) 6 June 1944."

His awards and decorations included a Purple Heart, a Distinguished Flying Cross, a presidential citation, and the French Croix de Guerre.

On Sept. 17, 1944, Cannon and Krebs were again flying paratroopers behind enemy lines. This time it was for the allied invasion of the Netherlands for Operation Market Garden. After they had dropped the troops, their plane was hit by anti-aircraft flak, forcing them to bail out. What followed was a 42-day odyssey during which they evaded their captors with the help of Dutch civilians.

"When I parachuted into Holland, I felt I was nothing—someone small and unimportant—a speck in the universe leaving a disabled plane," he told Air Line Pilot magazine. "When I left Holland, I sensed I had accomplished far more than our original mission. I had learned from the 'defeated' the true meaning of freedom and how we must never give up fighting for it."

AMTRAK

(Ms. BROWN of Florida asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, as a member for 22 years on the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee and supporter of rail, my heart goes out to the families and individuals who suffered in the wake of the Amtrak derailment in Philadelphia.

The Republican leadership in Washington continues its long-term failure to adequately fund transportation infrastructure in this country, and starving Amtrak from the funds that it truly needs to operate a national system is one example of the failure of this House. It is sad that the Republicans, on the day that seven or eight people died and 200 were injured, voted to cut funding for Amtrak.

It is a shame that in the people's House—the people's House—that the people who represent the people are stuck on stupid. We need a comprehensive transportation system, and we need to stop starving Amtrak.

It is amazing that this House voted the day of the accident to cut Amtrak. It is unacceptable. This is the people's House, and the people should be in charge. To whom God has given much, much is expected, and they expect more from the people's House than what happened yesterday in this House of Representatives.

[From the New York Times, May 13, 2015]

AMTRAK CRASH AND AMERICA'S DECLINING CONSTRUCTION SPENDING

(By David Leonhardt)

Investigators into the Amtrak crash in Philadelphia are focusing on excess speed, but there is a related issue: the overall condition of Amtrak and the nation's infrastructure. One of the reasons that American trains should not travel 100 miles an hour in many places is that the state of our rail system—like the state of our bridges, highways and airports—is not good.

Many airports here look dilapidated relative to those in Asia and Europe. Roads are choked with traffic. The fastest train from Boston to Washington takes about six and a half hours. The fastest train from Paris to Marseille—a slightly longer distance—takes just over three hours.

The train that derailed on Tuesday was thought to be traveling at least 100 miles an hour—twice the speed limit on that section of track. That is about half the French train's average speed on the trip from Paris to Marseille. (Reuters has also reported that the section of the track where the crash occurred lacked advanced braking technology designed to prevent derailments.)

Much of the problem of crumbling infrastructure has existed for years. There is, however, a new development that has made

things worse. The combined money that federal, state and local governments spend on construction has dropped significantly, relative to the size of the economy, in the last five years. And only part of the decline stems from the end of the stimulus program, which temporarily lifted infrastructure spending.

Such spending now represents about 1.5 percent of total economic activity, down from about 1.8 percent on average from 1993 through 2008. It's at its lowest level in at least 22 years. (A hat-tip to Joe Weisenthal, of Business Insider, who calculated this statistic in 2013, after the collapse of a bridge near Seattle.)

Lawrence Summers, the former Treasury secretary and Harvard president, sent an email to us today making an argument similar to Mr. Weisenthal's. More infrastructure spending would both make accidents less likely and bring economic benefits.

"Projections for the first half of this year now almost universally suggest the U.S. economy will have grown at an annual rate of well under 1 percent," Mr. Summers wrote. "If this isn't stagnation, I wonder what would be."

He added: "A major infrastructure investment program would reduce long-run deferred maintenance liabilities, raise demand and G.D.P., put construction workers back to work and raise investment. Interest rates may not always be as low as they are now, so it's high time to get started."

Other Democrats have begun making similar arguments today. Many congressional Republicans have historically supported infrastructure spending as well, but have been more reluctant recently.

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[From the New York Times, May 13, 2015]

ONE DAY AFTER WRECK, INCREASED FUNDING FOR AMTRAK FAILS IN A HOUSE PANEL

(By Michael D. Shear and Jad Mouawad)

WASHINGTON.—The bodies had not yet been fully recovered from the Amtrak derailment in Philadelphia before Capitol Hill erupted hours later into its usual partisan clash over how much money to spend on the long-struggling national rail service.

As investigators picked through the rubble on Wednesday morning, Democratic lawmakers in Washington angrily demanded an increase in Amtrak funding, calling Tuesday night's accident a result of congressional failure to support the rail system. Republicans refused, defeating the request in a morning committee hearing and accusing Democrats of using a tragedy for political reasons.

"It was beneath you," Representative Mike Simpson, Republican of Idaho, snapped at a Democratic colleague after the funding increase was defeated in a 30-to-21 vote.

The scene in the hearing room was a replay of the swirling politics that have threatened to consume Amtrak in the four decades since it was nationalized by the United States government. Like the rest of the country's crumbling public infrastructure, its aging rail beds and decades-old trains are sagging under increased use, especially in the Northeast, where nearly three-quarters of all travel takes place on the trains, not on planes.

And the immediate political rancor overshadowed another fight to come soon: whether Congress will delay a mandate to install equipment that would have automatically reduced the speed of Northeast Regional train No. 188. The deadline for installing the system, called positive train control, is the end of 2015, but Congress is considering extending the deadline to 2020 at the urging of