



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 114th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 161

WASHINGTON, WEDNESDAY, JUNE 24, 2015

No. 102

House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
June 24, 2015.

I hereby appoint the Honorable JOHN J. DUNCAN, Jr. to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 6, 2015, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 1 hour and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m.

REBUILDING OUR NATION'S INFRASTRUCTURE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, there has been a flurry of activity regarding infrastructure funding in recent days. We had the first hearing in the Ways and Means Committee in the 55 months since my Republican friends took over to deal with transportation finance. There have been press conferences and proposals, and actually, a few other hearings have been scheduled.

Despite all the furor, there is only one solution which is broadly supported, which is easy to implement, and which does the job. That solution is raising the gas tax.

Now, we heard at the hearing on Ways and Means the three basic arguments that are offered against that: that it is not politically possible, that there is really no time to do this so we have to extend it to the end of the year, and that this would somehow be a burden on families.

Actually, that is not true. The notion that it is not politically possible is not remotely the case. There are 20 States in the last 2½ years that have stepped up to raise their gas taxes.

Ironically, information submitted by the American Road & Transportation Builders Association at our Ways and Means hearing pointed out that the legislators in those States who voted to increase the gas tax were reelected at an over 90 percent rate, and the legislators that voted for the gas tax in the States were reelected at a higher percentage than those who voted against it.

If anybody needs more proof, just look at what has happened already this year where six very red States—Idaho; Utah; South Dakota; Iowa; Nebraska, overriding a Governor's veto; and Georgia—have all met their responsibilities raising the gas tax. It absolutely is something that can be done with a little political courage.

The notion that somehow there is no time, that we have got to fuss around and it is going to take extensive hearings to come forward with the proposal—well, only if it is a complex, convoluted, untested, and controversial proposal. Raising the gas tax would take about 1 week's work, could be implemented quickly, and is the simplest and least expensive revenue measure to implement.

What about this notion that somehow it is a burden on American fami-

lies? Well, the proposal that I have introduced would cost less than 25 cents a day, and those families that would pay the increased user fees are suffering over \$350 a year damage to their vehicles from poorly maintained roads. The American Society of Civil Engineers suggests that that cost per family is going to be over a \$1,000 a year by 2020. And the American public is paying by being stuck in traffic, in congestion, costing \$120 billion a year. It costs money to them—money that could have been used for more productive purposes—and time away from their families.

Imagine if we just came back from our July recess and dedicated the week of July 13 to solving the infrastructure crisis in this country where America is falling apart and falling behind. The people who were experts at the hearing that weren't heard from could have answered all those questions.

Where else are we going to find something that is broadly supported by business and labor, by truckers and AAA, bicyclist, engineers, environmentalists, local governments? We would have all of those people before us supporting a solution to this important challenge. I can't think of any other issue that would bring all those people together and support congressional action.

We could stop the slide of America falling apart and falling behind. We could put hundreds of thousands of people to work at family-wage jobs all across America while we strengthen our communities, make them more livable, and provide an economic boost for the future.

Why don't we do that? Why can't we take "yes" for an answer, deal with the broadest coalition of support for any major issue, and have another victory like we did with the SGR? We can do it, and it is hard to think of something that would be more important.

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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HEALTHCARE.GOV DATA BREACH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LOUDERMILK) for 5 minutes.

Mr. LOUDERMILK. Mr. Speaker, throughout my life, I have learned that the American people are strong and resilient. Throughout our history, we have shown time and time again our unique ability to overcome every obstacle and every adversary that has blocked our path to freedom. This resilience is what has advanced our Nation from being a ragtag rabble of citizens who took up arms in the American Revolution to being the greatest superpower in the world.

Throughout our advancement as a nation, we have not always been perfect. In fact, we have made some grave mistakes. However, our shared dedication to liberty and justice for all people has put us back on course. And though it sometimes takes years, or even generations, the spirit of American exceptionalism overshadows our mistakes and, with the spirit of forgiveness and reconciliation, we move forward.

However, when the government and its leaders purposefully mislead the American people, they are much less willing to forgive and forget, especially when such deception puts the people at risk, threatens their God-given rights or the sovereignty of this Nation. Mr. Speaker, I fear the American people and the Members of this Congress have, once again, been deceived, and I intend to get to the bottom of it.

When the 111th Congress ran through this body the Affordable Care Act, the American people were sold a bill of goods with deceiving statements and deceptive promises, statements such as, "If you like your healthcare plan, you can keep it." Although this disastrous legislation passed against the will of the people, some Americans trusted that the law would not take away their chosen healthcare plan. Unfortunately, the American people found out the hard way they have been deceived.

Now, Mr. Speaker, new reports give evidence of another deception surrounding ObamaCare. Prior to the launch of the healthcare.gov Web site, officials of this administration assured Congress and the American people that personal information submitted via the ObamaCare Web site would be secure and would not be permanently stored. However, new evidence suggests this may have been just another bait-and-switch tactic.

Contrary to what we have been told, the government is apparently storing American citizens' personal identifiable information obtained through the healthcare.gov Web site. If this is indeed true, then, this is not only another assault on the good faith of the American people, but, more importantly, it puts them at significant personal risk.

This government has recently shown its inability to secure computer sys-

tems and protect sensitive information. In the past several months, we have been inundated with reports of security breaches of government computer systems, disclosing personal and official information that potentially harms our national security.

With many Americans being forced into the government healthcare exchange, over 11 million people have registered with healthcare.gov. A breach of this system could be larger and potentially more disastrous than any of the previous breaches, which is a serious concern.

Mr. Speaker, the last time I checked, our Founders gave us a government of the people, not a government of elitists, establishment, or executive privilege. We are a nation of laws, not a nation of feelings or good intentions. We are bound by the Constitution, but that Constitution is only as sound as the integrity of those who have sworn to uphold it.

The American people expect their government to operate within the constraints of the Constitution, the limits of the law, and to be transparent and accountable. Unconstrained activity by government agencies has gone on far too long, and now their deceptions and reckless behavior is threatening the safety and the security of the American people. These actions put the future of our Nation at great risk, and they must stop.

As chairman of the Subcommittee on Oversight of Science, Space, and Technology, I intend to diligently pursue this issue, to find the truth, expose those who have violated the trust of the American people, and ensure the illegal collection of data by our government is stopped and the previously collected data is permanently removed.

I intend to use the power given to this body through our Constitution and the trust invested in us by the American people to right these wrongs. Our citizens deserve better than this, and I am committed to ensuring that the American people have a nation that is once again free, safe, and full of opportunity.

GUN VIOLENCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. QUIGLEY) for 5 minutes.

Mr. QUIGLEY. Mr. Speaker, last week, nine parishioners were shot and killed inside Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, South Carolina, one of the oldest African American churches in the United States.

In the days following the horrific tragedy in Charleston, we paused to reflect and send our prayers to families grieving an unimaginable loss. I wish this tragedy in Charleston were an isolated incident, but it seems to be part of a terrible recurring pattern.

After national tragedies, society should engage in a discussion about how to address and potentially prevent

such tragedies from happening again. Let's remember that after Katrina, we talked about FEMA and national readiness. But the gun lobby doesn't want us to have this conversation. They accuse anyone who tries with exploiting the deaths of innocent people.

With that logic, we couldn't talk about solutions when 13 people were killed and 8 were injured during the shooting in the Washington, D.C., Navy Yard; or after a person opened fire during a midnight screening of a film, "The Dark Knight Rises" in 2012, killing 12 and injuring 58 others; or when 28 people were shot and killed, including 20 innocent children, at Sandy Hook Elementary School; or when a man shot 3 people and killed 7 others at a Sikh temple in Oak Creek, Wisconsin; or when 14 people were shot and 6 were killed in 2011 during a constituent meeting hosted by our colleague, Congresswoman Gabby Giffords, in a supermarket parking lot in Tucson; or when a man opened fire in Fort Hood, Texas, in 2009, killing 13 people, injuring 30 others; or in 2008 when a man opened fire at a lecture hall at Northern Illinois University, shooting 21 students and killing 6; or when a senior at Virginia Tech went on a shooting rampage on campus in 2007, killing 33 people and injuring 23 others; or when 2 seniors at Columbine High School attacked their classmates and teachers, wounding 24 and killing 15; or in Chicago and cities across the country which experience gun tragedies every day.

Yet, since I have come to this Congress nearly 7 years ago, the people's House has refused to hold even one hearing on the epidemic of gun violence we are facing.

Last Sunday alone, in Chicago, 14 people were shot and 1 man was killed, all within a matter of hours. In May, Chicago saw 300 people shot and 37 people killed in shootings. Every day in America, 297 people are shot and nearly 90 people are killed by guns.

According to Harvard University researchers, the rate of mass shootings has increased threefold since 2011, occurring an average of every 64 days. Let me repeat that. A mass shooting occurs in the U.S. on the average of every 64 days.

□ 1015

When will enough be enough? When will we stand up and say we may not be able to stop every crime, but we can stop some of them and at least minimize the damage of others? When will we realize and acknowledge that this type of mass violence does not happen in other advanced countries? When will we finally be able to have a national discussion about gun violence?

Instead, the gun lobby stymies debate by arguing that no gun regulation can prevent criminals and the mentally ill from killing people with guns, but I don't buy that. Sure, no single law or set of laws can prevent every act of