

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, work on the Nation's bridges, highways, and transit has all but stopped because of 34 patch extensions that keep everything—except patchwork—on hold.

Today, the House is rushing out of town early, leaving a new 3-month patch. This time, though, the Republican House is scrambling out of the Capitol, literally, to get away from the Republican Senate, which had been trying for a 6-year bill. The Republican House's "my way or the highway" was addressed to the Republican Senate, and the public be damned—and it worked. The Republican Senate has given up on the Nation's infrastructure, too. The Republican Senate announced this morning that it will accept the House's 3-month patch. Six months of control of the House and Senate by the Republicans has made Congress even more dysfunctional.

The new House 3-month patch has nothing to do with roads and bridges. Who knows what will get done this time? House Republicans see political goals at the end of their 3-month road, when the must-pass highway bill could serve their purposes, such as the usual, if dangerous, dispute over an extension of the debt ceiling.

Yet, Republican and Democratic States alike keep meeting their obligations under the State-Federal partnership. Eighteen States and the District of Columbia have raised their gas user fees, going as high as 10-cent increases in Iowa and in Wyoming; but the roads, bridges, and transit remain stalled because the Federal partner keeps dropping out. More than half of the funds for a nationwide system that connects our States with one another comes from the Federal trust fund.

During the 34 patch delays, not a lick of work on a final bill has been done except the Senate's current try at a 6-year bill. There have been no serious talks here on alternatives to the gas user fee, although it long ago was swallowed by today's hard-won fuel efficiency that leaves the transit trust fund thirsty for a refill after a year and a half or so.

Democrats, however, have offered four alternatives to the current user fee, which is the legacy of the Eisenhower years. House Republicans have offered none. Congress has refused to raise the Federal user fee since 1992, adding to the woes of the 1950's method we use to pay for our roads.

The Republican House runs out of town today to hide from the Republican Senate. As they run home, I can only hope they run into the arms of their own angry constituents on their own rickety roads. House Republicans can run, but they can't hide from the broken down bridges, roads, and transit they will use back home.

DEMAND FOR TRANSPARENCY IN THE REGULATORY AND RULE-MAKING PROCESS

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

Mr. HARDY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in order to address a concern that anyone who has ever owned or has run a business truly understands—the negative effects of unchecked government regulations on our American economy.

No matter how large or small, Federal regulations are being added each day into law by the hundreds—and even sometimes by the thousands—most of which are not directly approved by Congress.

By allowing Washington bureaucrats to continue to stuff the overwhelming number of regulations into congressionally passed legislation, we are essentially handing over authority to the Federal agencies for them to legislate as they please. It is our job in Congress to oversee these regulations as they are being generated in order to provide that our constituents are not left behind.

During this Congress, we have made great strides in reforming the regulations process in order to help the economy grow. A great example of that occurred yesterday with the passage of the REINS Act. There should be no question that any regulation that makes an annual impact of \$100 million on the economy should require congressional approval before it can become law.

As my colleagues are aware, a copy of the day's Federal Register is delivered to each of our offices daily. This book provides a hard copy of every new regulation that ranges from environmental protection to labor standards, to health guidelines, to restrictions on financial institutions.

Last year, the Federal Register contained over 77,000 pages, with 3,554 new regulations. Even though this large number of pages is absurd, it was only the sixth highest page count in the Federal Register's history. As of this morning, the 2015 Federal Register sits at over 45,000 pages.

It is unthinkable to me that the most important document—the Constitution—can fit on 39 pages, in this little book. In comparison, this is the July 13 edition of the Federal Register. It is 627 pages, and it is only one of three editions from that day alone.

Mr. Speaker, when is enough enough, and when does it become too much?

The continual expansion of our government through a vast number of regulations causes our economy to become as shaky and unstable as the Federal Registers that are stacked up in my office from this year, which is unacceptable and very concerning.

An even larger issue comes from how the general public is made aware of these proposed rules and the opportunity to voice one's concerns on the rules. While we are provided with a

daily index of rules and new regulations through the Federal Register, the American taxpayers, for whom we work, are left in the dark.

Since these regulations do not take into account the economic impact that is placed on American businesses and families, each new regulation can lead to lower wages, job losses, and higher prices for goods. In 2014, Federal regulations cost American families an estimated \$1.88 trillion in financial burden, representing, roughly, \$15,000 per household. This cost is also larger than Canada's economy, is larger than Mexico's economy, and is larger than the economies of Australia, Russia, Spain, and South Korea, just to name a few. In fact, the economies of only nine nations in the world are larger than the cost of our regulations.

Although all sized businesses and industries feel the effects of government regulations, it is the small businesses that face greater adversity from regulations due to costs attributed to comply. In addition to compliance costs, limited comment periods, and a lack of information pertaining to how they make their opinions heard, business owners are usually those who end up being left out in the cold.

I ask my colleagues to join me in demanding more transparency in the regulatory and rulemaking process because it is our duty to our constituents.

GIVING SENIORS A MEDICARE BIRTHDAY PRESENT

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

Mr. GRAYSON. Mr. Speaker, 50 years ago this week, President Lyndon Johnson signed the law that created Medicare and Medicaid—the most important healthcare programs in our country's history prior to the Affordable Care Act. With one stroke of his pen, President Johnson guaranteed both poor Americans and older Americans the right to high-quality, affordable medical treatment.

Thanks to Medicare, for 50 years now, our seniors have received the health care they have needed to stay healthy and to live full lives; but despite the success, there are gaps in Medicare coverage that need to be closed. The most glaring gap is the fact that Medicare does not provide basic medical coverage for seniors' eyes, ears, and teeth. It is as though Medicare assumes that seniors don't need to see or to hear or to chew.

We are not talking about exotic, high-tech treatments. We are talking about no Medicare coverage for eyeglasses, eye exams, hearing aids, cavity fillings, and dentures. We are talking about no treatment for medical conditions that lead to blindness, deafness, lost teeth, and serious gum disease, which has been strongly linked to heart disease. It is unthinkable that we deny our seniors this elementary level of care.

There are 2.7 million seniors in America who are blind. How many of them would be able to see today if they had received simple annual eye exams as part of their Medicare coverage?

Medicare is a promise that we make to ourselves—the young to the old, one generation to the next. The promise is that, after you reach your 65th birthday, your medical needs will be met. To keep that promise, our seniors have paid into the system, in some cases for a half a century, before they receive a single earned benefit. They deserve the best care we can provide for them.

This week, to honor the 50th anniversary of this lifesaving program we call Medicare, I am introducing the Seniors Have Eyes, Ears, and Teeth Act. This bill will amend title XVIII—the Medicare provision of the Social Security Act—to repeal the arbitrary exclusion of eyeglasses, eye exams, hearing aids, hearing exams, and dental care from Medicare coverage. Two short lines in the U.S. Code have barred that coverage for 50 years. I simply delete those lines. I urge my congressional colleagues to enact this quick, easy, and necessary reform.

Medicare should provide health coverage for every part of your body, including eyes, ears, and teeth. Over 50 million Americans enjoy Medicare coverage. To celebrate the 50th anniversary of Medicare, let's guarantee to 50 million Americans the health care they need in order to look into the eyes of the ones they love, to see our Fourth of July fireworks each year, and to hear it when freedom rings.

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EMBRACE TRADE OPPORTUNITIES WITH ASIA

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

Mr. PAULSEN. Mr. Speaker, earlier this summer Democrats and Republicans came together to pass a trade authorization bill that set the standards for any trade deal that the United States negotiates with other countries.

It guarantees oversight by Congress, it guarantees transparency for the public, and it guarantees that our negotiators have the opportunity to get the best deal for our workers, our farmers, our ranchers, and our employers.

This week trade negotiators from 12 different countries around the Pacific Rim are meeting in Hawaii for negotiations with the Trans-Pacific Partnership. It is a deal that will open doors for American businesses to sell their products overseas and create jobs right here at home.

Mr. Speaker, the fact of the matter is this: 95 percent of the world's consumers live outside of the United States; 80 percent of the world's purchasing power is outside of the United States.

We need to allow our American companies to compete and to be able to sell

their products and goods and services or we will fall behind.

In addition, these negotiations will allow America to act as a counterweight to the growing influence of China in the region.

If the United States doesn't write the rules for the global economy, China will step in and write them, and it won't be to the benefit of American workers and businesses.

Mr. Speaker, while Congress and the American people should and will vet any deal that results from the current Trans-Pacific Partnership negotiations, it is important to understand what a successful agreement will mean here at home.

For starters, it means boosting pay and higher wages. That is because jobs that rely on trade pay 18 percent higher than those jobs that don't. It also means boosting job growth right here in America. That is because one in five jobs are tied to trade.

In Minnesota, Mr. Speaker, 775,000 jobs are currently supported by trade, and new trade with Asia will enhance and support that opportunity to build on new success.

It also means boosting our country's small- and medium-sized businesses. In Minnesota, 90 percent of these small businesses are the companies that export goods and services.

Now, that being said, there is still a lot of work that needs to be done by our negotiators to make sure they reach an agreement that is best for the American people. We need cooperation from the other countries that are involved in these negotiations.

Canada needs to step up to the plate on tariff and quota issues dealing with their dairy and their egg industries. Japan needs to step up on agriculture issues.

Progress still needs to be made to ensure that American intellectual property is protected. However, with commitment from our trading partners, I am confident that we can overcome these remaining hurdles.

Mr. Speaker, we need trade deals where everyone benefits and everyone follows the rules. We live in an interconnected world, and we should be embracing opportunities that open more markets for American goods and services.

It is time to show the world that America will continue to lead the way in the 21st century global economy.

REMEMBERING DIRECTOR ROBERT PARKER OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY POLICE DEPARTMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. WILSON) for 5 minutes.

Ms. WILSON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with a heavy heart. I am deeply saddened by the death of former Miami-Dade County Police Director Robert Parker. I extend my sincerest sympathies to his family at this difficult time.

Director Parker was a friend and a true humanitarian. Throughout his career in law enforcement with the Miami-Dade County Police Department, he was committed to making south Florida a safer place to work, to live, and to visit. He was well respected and celebrated, and he fought to create opportunities for men and women of color.

As a longtime mentor and leader of the 5000 Role Models of Excellence Project, Director Parker worked closely with me to save at-risk minority boys and young men.

His impact is evident by the thousands of success stories of Role Model boys who, under his mentorship, have gone on to college and thriving careers. The 5000 Role Models of Excellence Project in south Florida owes Director Parker a huge debt of gratitude.

Director Parker testified before Congress on behalf of violence in the Black community. He testified before Congress about the tragic death of Trayvon Martin. He went on to be featured on CNN, MSNBC, and all of our local TV shows.

Because of his knowledge, he went on to serve as a consultant for cities all over this country. Our boys and our community were so very, very proud of this wonderful role model.

Mr. Speaker, Director Parker adored his family, his sweet, sweet grandchildren, his daughter, Kalika, his son, Robert, Jr., his son, Kyron, and his devoted wife and the love of his life, Veronica.

Our great Nation has lost a patriot who lived to embody the principles of equality, justice, and freedom upon which America is founded. To fully understand our loss, you must first understand the treasure that we all shared in Director Parker.

Director Parker showed a bright intellect and caring nature, growing up as a child in the rural community of Monticello, Florida.

He bravely served in the United States Army. He joined the Miami Police Department in 1976, when it was still known as the Dade County Police Safety Department. He was a bright and eager young officer who wanted to make his community safer.

Mr. Speaker, Director Parker was an officer's officer. He worked hard, and he made great sacrifices for his career through the love and support of his family.

He enjoyed a storied rise up the ladder of police leadership because of his determination to solve crimes. He was affectionately called "Bobby" by his friends and colleagues, but he was also nicknamed "Marathon Man."

He famously earned that name by giving a foot chase to catch one of the most notorious thieves in Miami-Dade County history.

The suspect had consistently eluded capture because he was too crafty and fast for most officers, but not too fast for Robert Parker.

His determination is what set him apart from others. He did not view his