

Mr. POLIQUIN. Mr. Speaker, sadly, every year in America, more than 20,000 babies are born addicted to drugs. Last year alone, nearly 1,000 of those babies were born in Maine. We can help these babies by passing H.R. 3865, the Cradle Act, of which I am proud to be an original cosponsor.

Eighty percent of addicted infants are covered by Medicaid and treated at local hospitals; however, our hospitals are overwhelmed. They are not equipped to provide the specialized care that these babies desperately need to recover from the drugs in their tiny bodies.

Residential pediatric recovery centers are designed and professionally staffed to provide this critically important early clinical care. These centers depend on Medicaid dollars to stay open, but need clear certification guidelines in order to receive those funds. The Cradle Act does that.

Every baby born into this world deserves our compassion and care. This is an opportunity to help the most vulnerable among us. This bill offers real hope for a healthy, safe, and loving start for thousands of American babies born addicted to drugs.

MASS SHOOTINGS

(Ms. KELLY of Illinois asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. KELLY of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, another mass shooting, another moment of silence. Actually, we will have to do two in a day or back-to-back because of the shooting in Savannah, Georgia. That did not get the attention because 1 person died and 3 people were injured, not like in California, where 14 died and 17 were injured.

You stood already this week for Colorado. I say “you” because I don’t do it any more. I can’t be hypocritical. You stand up, you sit down, you do nothing.

There have been 355 mass shootings so far this year, not to mention the many who have died alone and get no attention or no moment of silence.

When are we really going to stand up and do something? Just who has to die—your mother? your wife? your son? Or how many? We need to stand up, speak up, and take actions rather than another moment of silence. It is deafening, and it is killing us.

FUNDRAISING EFFORTS FOR PENN STATE THON

(Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, next February, more than 700 students from Penn State University will come together for the university’s annual dance marathon, otherwise known as THON. This event is the culmination of a huge fundraising effort for the Four Diamonds Fund at Penn State Hershey Children’s Hos-

pital, which is dedicated to fighting pediatric cancer. THON is the largest student-run philanthropy in the world.

Even though much of Pennsylvania’s Fifth Congressional District falls solidly within the territory of Pittsburgh’s sports teams, I want to commend the Philadelphia Flyers and the New Jersey Devils hockey teams. The proceeds from tickets purchased for either the Devils game on December 19 or the Flyers game on January 5 will go to benefit THON. Both games fall within Penn State’s winter break, allowing students to support this effort even when they are away from the university.

I wish all the students involved in THON the best of luck as they continue in this tremendous effort. They should be deeply proud of the role they are playing in striking a blow to pediatric cancer.

NO HARMFUL OMNIBUS POLICY RIDERS

(Mr. LOWENTHAL asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LOWENTHAL. Mr. Speaker, I came to talk about no harmful omnibus policy riders, and I hope to get to that point, but my thoughts and prayers go out to the people of San Bernardino, the victims, and the families who have been affected by this violence. Again, I hope that this violence wakes up the Congress to begin a really serious discussion about violence in America, by Americans, against Americans.

In 8 days, we are going to find ourselves staring at a deadline to keep the Federal Government open. As negotiations are finalized, we need a clean spending bill, not one that is peppered with toxic policy riders.

We do not need more attacks on environmental protections, Planned Parenthood, the Affordable Care Act, and financial regulations. These are unacceptable policy changes in an appropriations bill, and they are being threatened to be included.

Mr. Speaker, in order for all of us to support this bill, I hope you have the courage to bring a clean bill to the floor.

JOE E. EDWARDS’ RETIREMENT

(Mr. LOUDERMILK asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LOUDERMILK. Mr. Speaker, today I want to pay tribute to a true pillar of our community, Pastor Joe E. Edwards.

For the past quarter century, Joe Edwards has served as pastor of the Church of God in Cartersville, Georgia; however, this Sunday, Joe Edwards will deliver his final sermon as senior pastor at The Church At Liberty Square, as he is retiring.

Joe Edwards has been more than just a pastor. He has been a leader who has sought not only to preach the gospel of Christ inside the church, but put his faith into action throughout the community.

While he has made numerous contributions to our community, his vision of unifying local churches to pray for local, State, and national leaders is fundamentally transforming the culture in our entire county. While he will be missed in the pulpit each Sunday, his legacy will live on through the thousands of lives he has touched.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the people of Georgia’s 11th Congressional District and the United States House of Representatives, I commend Pastor Joe E. Edwards for a life of service to God, community, and country, and congratulate him as he moves on to a new chapter in his life.

Godspeed, Pastor Joe.

GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN AND THE HIGHWAY BILL

(Mrs. BUSTOS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. BUSTOS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to thank my colleagues for working across the aisle to prepare to pass the first long-term highway bill in more than a decade.

For too long, Washington has governed from one manufactured crisis to another. This has hurt our economy by creating an environment of uncertainty for great manufacturers like Caterpillar, John Deere, UTC, and Woodward.

American families shouldn’t have to worry when they cross a decrepit bridge on their way to the grocery store or take their kids to school. The men and women of labor who build our roads and bridges deserve this long-overdue, job-creating highway bill. And so do we.

So, Mr. Speaker, I commend my colleagues for working together on this important issue.

FUNDING BILL RIDERS

(Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge my colleagues on the other side of the aisle to end their calls for shutdown and to work in a bipartisan manner to pass a funding measure without riders.

This body has gotten into the habit of using last-minute Hail Mary votes to save us from one manufactured crisis after another, and it is taking our attention away from the list of things we need to get done—things like reforming our criminal justice system, addressing gun violence, or creating jobs.

There is just 1 week left before funding runs out, and it looks like we are heading into yet another crisis. In the midst of growing threats to national

security, we need to take politics out of this equation. We need to take poison pills that threaten working American families off the negotiating table.

Mr. Speaker, I am ready and willing to work to keep the government of the greatest nation in the world open, and I know my Democratic colleagues will as well. I hope every Member of this body is ready to do the same.

I want to express my condolences to San Bernardino and its families on their loss. I urge Congress to get moving on gun safety legislation.

□ 0915

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 22, SURFACE TRANSPORTATION REAUTHORIZATION AND REFORM ACT OF 2015

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 546 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 546

Resolved, That upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider the conference report to accompany the bill (H.R. 22) to authorize funds for Federal-aid highways, highway safety programs, and transit programs, and for other purposes. All points of order against the conference report and against its consideration are waived. The conference report shall be considered as read. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the conference report to its adoption without intervening motion except: (1) one hour of debate; and (2) one motion to recommit if applicable.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois). The gentleman from Georgia is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. POLIS), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I confess to you, I usually use the time that the Reading Clerk is reading the rule to collect my thoughts and think about what the bill is before us today and how I am going to try to persuade my colleagues to vote “yes.” But we only got about 15 seconds of the Reading Clerk this morning because this rule is so straightforward and so simple.

I am thinking, why is it—because I sit on the Rules Committee. I think we do good work up there. Good work is sometimes complicated work. Why is it that the rule is so short today? And the

answer is because we are in conference report season, Mr. Speaker. We are in conference report season.

We have already done the hard work in committee. We have already done the hard work on the floor. The Rules Committee has already done the hard work of sorting through dozens and dozens and dozens and dozens of amendments. The Senate has done the same hard work.

And we are now here on the conclusion of that work, on the first long-term transportation bill in more than a decade.

Mr. Speaker, Democratic administrations, Democratic Presidents, Democratic Houses, Democratic Senates have failed to do what we are doing today. Republican administrations, Republican Presidents, Republican Houses, Republican Senates have failed to do what we are doing today.

In divided government today, Mr. Speaker, I dare say my friend from Colorado didn’t get everything he wanted in this bill, I certainly didn’t get everything I wanted in this bill, but we are taking the first big step forward toward certainty for the American people on transportation that we have seen in more than a decade under both administrations.

Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 546 is a standard rule for consideration of a conference report to accompany H.R. 22, the FAST Act, the Fixing America’s Surface Transportation Act.

I want to thank Chairman BILL SHUSTER for the way that he conducted this entire process. Mr. Speaker, I have the great pleasure of serving on his committee, and between his leadership, the ranking member’s leadership, Mr. DEFAZIO, we have crafted a bipartisan, bicameral bill.

I was privileged to serve on the conference committee, Mr. Speaker, that completed this work, and it worked the way conference committees are supposed to work, I guess, because, Mr. Speaker, it is the first conference committee I have been on.

I have been here 4½ years. We don’t see things get to conference that often. I was a staffer around here, chief of staff, for a decade, never saw a conference committee from that perspective.

Mr. Speaker, these things don’t happen that often. They should happen more. We considered a conference committee report on education yesterday. We are doing transportation today. I think we might be on to something. I think we might be on to something. It is called doing the long, hard work, Mr. Speaker.

I don’t know how many sound bites you have read about the transportation bill. I don’t know how much press is being paid to this bill. It has taken not days, not weeks, not even months, but years to bring folks together around this solution, and folks have worked incredibly hard to make that happen.

It is regular order, Mr. Speaker. It is regular order. This is the way it is sup-

posed to happen. We are not supposed to have a bill airdropped into the House of Representatives, into the Senate under a take-it-or-leave-it circumstance.

What you are supposed to have are those days, those weeks, those months, and, yes, even years of discussion and debate and moving people together, finding that common ground, finding those solutions, moving it to a conference report at the end. And that is exactly what we have done here today.

Mr. Speaker, this is a report that contains views from across this conference—Members from rural districts, Members from urban districts, Members from districts that focus on mass transportation, Members from districts that have incredible road needs.

It covers folks from the West in single-Member States, single-district States, and folks from the East, with some of the highest population densities in the country. It is an amazing accomplishment to bring all of those folks together.

I would tell you, Mr. Speaker, historically, that has been the way transportation has been. Transportation is not one of those issues that divides us as Republicans and Democrats or even from the East and West. It is one of those issues that brings people together.

It is one of those issues—and there aren’t many—but it is one of those issues that we actually have a constitutional responsibility to perform. The Constitution does not ask much of this United States Congress when it comes to developing policy and practice domestically here in this country, but transportation is one of those issues.

Mr. Speaker, I mentioned it was the first long-term bill in more than a decade. That is absolutely true. Length is important all by itself; certainty in transportation, important all by itself.

We passed a 2-year transportation extension, Mr. Speaker. We put in the requirement to streamline some of the regulatory process. Here we are, more than 2 years later, and those regulations haven’t even come out yet.

Building is a long-term process. Rule-making, so that people can build, is a long-term process.

Having long-term certainty is valuable in and of itself, but that is not just what this bill does. It focuses on the national highway freight network, Mr. Speaker.

Between Washington, D.C., and Baltimore, for example, there are three major Federal arteries. We have the Baltimore-Washington Parkway running those 35 miles north. We have U.S. Route 1 running that distance. We have U.S. Interstate 95 running that distance. Those roads are never separated by more than about 4 miles.

Now, whether or not we need three major Federal arteries running between two cities over a course of 35 miles, that is a debate that we can have. What the scope of Federal transportation funding should be is a debate