

MASS TRANSIT

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, there is a recent article in The New York Times about the Koch brothers and its stealth campaign to try to attack mass transit projects around the country. It was disturbing on several levels.

First and foremost, it is misguided in terms of the economic impact. Mr. Speaker, it is clear that there is \$4 of economic activity generated for every \$1 that is invested in transit. It increases business sales, and it results in higher real estate values and jobs created.

It is important to note that, right now, we have a road system that is heavily subsidized by the general fund. The road user charge has long since failed to pay for it. We have had to transfer \$140 billion just to keep the failing Surface Transportation Program afloat.

The Koch brothers argue, through their organization, that American cities really don't have the population density to support mass transit systems. That is false. It is clear that there are some very dense systems serving Chicago and New York, but there are very successful programs in Phoenix and Houston with much lower density that are providing essential services.

It is important to remember who gets that service, because transit is much less expensive for men and women to be able to have access to jobs and employment. The average vehicle costs almost \$10,000 a year to operate. In most families, it is the number two item in the family budget after housing. For many poor people, transportation is actually ahead of housing.

Transit provides access to jobs, so that people don't have to spend 42 hours a year trapped in traffic behind the wheel of a vehicle, as happens on average.

The notion that somehow we are going to be forced to look at a lack of density, well, communities across the country in the metropolitan areas are getting more and more dense. They are attracting young people, retired people, and more economic activity in the 49 largest metropolitan areas around the country. In those areas, transit is the most cost effective and environmentally sensitive way of providing that service, to say nothing of the fact that we kill almost 40,000 people a year on our roadways. Transit is amazingly safe by comparison.

One of the most disingenuous arguments is that transportation programs for mass transit are bad because they promote gentrification of our cities. Look at that argument for a moment. One of the things that is happening in cities across the country is that there is a new urban renaissance. Young millennials are moving back to the cit-

ies. Those are the engines of the economy. Aging baby boomers are finding it much more attractive to move into those urban cores than to be isolated out in the suburbs with a large-lot subdivision and forcing people to burn a gallon of gas to buy a gallon of milk.

Those urban areas are our future. Not everybody is going to do it, but the majority of people are. We ought to be investing in transportation systems for our future, not undermining them by limiting investments to transportation of the past.

We are in the process of a rapid revolution in transportation technology and people's approaches. More and more young people, actually, are choosing not to buy a car, which sits idle about 22½ hours a day and is very expensive. They are instead choosing transit, ride-share, bike-share, and being able to have transportation when they need it—Lyft and Uber—without having an anchor of an individual car bearing down on them.

Frankly, gentrification is a function of how we plan and develop our cities. That ought to be an invitation to think about how to do it better, as many cities are doing now, not to undermine progress by assailing transit.

CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SMUCKER). The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. THOMPSON) for 5 minutes.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, it has been more than a year since the House of Representatives unanimously approved the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act.

I am proud to see that, this week, the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee will consider career and technical education legislation. It is welcome news that this important topic will be examined by our congressional colleagues in the United States Senate. Career and technical education, or CTE, has helped countless men and women acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to compete in the workforce.

By empowering State and local leaders, improving alignment with in-demand jobs, increasing transparency and accountability, and ensuring a limited Federal role, we can modernize and strengthen career and technical education and help more individuals build successful and fulfilling careers.

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Career and technical education can help restore rungs on the ladder of opportunity. All Americans deserve a good-paying, family-sustaining job, and they might just need some new skills to get one.

America is still facing a widening skills gap that puts our workforce at a disadvantage to succeed in a 21st century economy. Today, there are an es-

timated 6.7 million jobs that are open and available in the United States.

While companies across the country have openings for high-paying jobs, and are anxious to hire, many workers lack the skills and adequate education needed to qualify and compete for these jobs, Mr. Speaker.

We have also seen students pushed down the college-for-all pathway. That just doesn't work for some students. There are many different pathways to success and life in this country.

One of the biggest challenges facing career and technical education is the stigma associated with it. Through the years, we have seen wrongheaded claims that students involved in the trades lacked ambition. Those misplaced assumptions are slowly subsiding, but not soon enough.

CTE has established itself as a path that many high-achieving students choose in pursuit of industry certifications and hands-on skills they can use right out of high school, in skills-based education programs or in college.

By modernizing the Federal investment in career and technical education programs, we will be able to connect more educators with industry stakeholders and close the skills gap in this country. There are good jobs out there, but people need to be qualified to get them.

I remain dedicated to working with my colleagues in the Senate on this effort. All education is career education and every American deserves a fair shot at learning the right skills to obtain a good-paying job.

WARRIORS TO WASHINGTON

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

Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Warriors to Washington, a praiseworthy nonprofit organization from Erie County, Pennsylvania.

Founded in 2013, Warriors to Washington was created to honor veterans from the northwest Pennsylvania region who were deployed and served our Nation in the Armed Forces as a result of the attacks on 9/11 by taking them to historical and national sites in Washington, D.C.

Warriors to Washington raises money to fund an annual trip to Washington, D.C., by which post-9/11 veterans are treated to an all-expense-paid experience, which includes visits to Arlington National Cemetery, the Vietnam Memorial, the World War II Memorial, the Flight 93 Memorial Park, and many other sites of national significance.

Warriors to Washington focuses on camaraderie and connection, while providing all attendees with a rewarding experience. The founder and president of Warriors to Washington, Joe Pfadt, believes it is important to give this opportunity to those who enlist and risk everything for our freedom.

Joe Pfadt is a retired U.S. Army veteran himself, and has been invigorated by giving back to our most recent veterans. He stresses the significance of visiting our Nation's Capital and seeing the very documents that every service person swears to defend: the U.S. Constitution and the Declaration of Independence.

Each year, the Warriors to Washington trip grows and evolves, continuously adapting to support the community and always striving to benefit as many veterans as possible. I am overjoyed to see members of my constituency stepping up to empower our veterans, and I am pleased to recognize the Warriors to Washington organization, which I am proud to say was founded in my district.

I ask my fellow colleagues in the House of Representatives to join me in saluting the unwavering dedication of Warriors to Washington and all those who are involved in their admirable efforts to serve our veterans.

DECORUM AND CIVILITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania). The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. LAMALFA) for 5 minutes.

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, I want to speak a little about decorum and civility. Here in Washington, D.C., we have a lack of it, it seems, and it is spreading all over. We are seeing it in the news. We are seeing a lot of it happen right here in this building.

Just a few days ago, an intern on the Senate side decided it would somehow be good or proper to make obscene comments as the President was walking around in the building. That intern received only a slap on the wrist for doing so.

We see it happening inside this Chamber in several ways. It is in something as simple as the 1-minute speeches we have in this Chamber each day. Members frequently blow through that time up to 80, 90 seconds before finally being gaveled down.

House rules are supposed to mean something. Sometimes in those speeches, even though they know it is against House rules, Members are disparaging individuals, calling them out by name, only to be gaveled after the speech is over with, instead of during, to stop that bad behavior.

About 2 years ago in June, we even had a sit-in that occurred in this Chamber in a big part of this side of the room over here; a sit-in where bootleg videos were being sent out and C-SPAN broadcast them, outside of the House rules, because one particular group felt like their voice needed to be heard, even outside of the rules, instead of working within the process the American people sent us here to do. Very disappointing.

Then, just last week, one of our Members decided that they wanted to play a tape recording that came allegedly from inside one of the detention

centers along the border, outside of clear decorum of House rules. The Member was repeatedly told it was outside the rules. Yet that recording went on for at least 3½ minutes, disrespecting this institution, disrespecting what the people sent us here to do.

We need to have enforcement of these rules. They need to be stronger. We need to empower the Speaker and the Chair to enforce the rules. When it is time, shut off the mike. It goes against the grain of what the American people sent us here for in the over 200 years of this institution.

Outside of this room we have Members of this body actually publicly calling for intimidation and harassment of fellow workers in government, whether it is in the Cabinet or fellow Members of this body.

What have we come to as a country when that behavior is called for by elected Members of this body? What have we come to?

We have seen it on the streets after the election and after the inauguration of this President, with Antifa and other groups claiming to be the voice of, I don't know who. Certainly, it isn't the voice of the people, hiding behind masks, hiding their identity, and causing wanton destruction.

When words like this come from people elected as a part of this body, that just fuels the fire, not only for bad behavior and disrespect for people who are doing their jobs, maybe with a different opinion from others, but respectfully doing their jobs; harassing them in restaurants or in markets, at the gas station, or wherever it is going to be; it is completely out of line.

I do not know where we are going as a country when our elected officials are calling for that kind of bad behavior.

So what are we going to do about it?

A lot of what drives this is what the people think, when the people demand that their elected leaders ratchet up their behavior to be just a little bit better.

You don't have an institution here when there are no rules, no order, no function. Instead, you have chaos. You can't get anything done around here, or anywhere else—even something as simple as a board game—if people are not following the rules. All that breeds is more misbehavior and more rule breaking.

There are a lot of people across this country who feel like that with the government out of control, legislation out of control, rules are for suckers. Why should they play when no one else is; when our borders aren't enforced; when laws on the books aren't enforced; and they see people being given rewards, whether the benefits of citizenship or just as simple as running this House Chamber. It is very discouraging and disappointing to the American public.

This institution is a much older and much more hallowed place than any one of us will ever walk through for

whatever time we are bestowed the opportunity to serve people in our respective districts 2 years at a time.

So it is high time that we have the rules in place, and that they are enforced, but also to look inwardly at ourselves as Members of this body to uphold the rules, the integrity of this institution.

TAX REFORM

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

Mr. REICHERT. Mr. Speaker, Friday marked 6 months since the tax reform bill was signed into law. Since that time, we have seen increased paychecks, greater investment, and new job opportunities across the country.

My colleagues and I on the House Ways and Means Committee talked about how best to overhaul our Tax Code. Our goal was always the same: to get our economy booming again.

In Washington State, where I am from, we are already seeing this boom and the positive impacts of tax reform: employee bonuses, savings on utilities, increased wages, and 401(k) matches.

They are people like a young woman in Seattle, for example, who was able to afford a new car, thanks to some extra money in her paycheck each month; or, the mother from Woodinville, Washington, who has been helping her son, daughter-in-law, and grandchild make ends meet while they were living paycheck to paycheck. With tax reform, her son is now taking home more money, which helps them provide for their family much easier.

Tax reform is not only resulting in more take-home pay, but it is making a difference in the workplace, too. Companies are creating new retail and manufacturing jobs and increasing wages and benefits. The Boeing Company is increasing investments in workforce development, facilities and infrastructure improvements for employees, and charitable giving.

But it is not just the employees of big companies who are seeing the benefits. Our local, family-owned businesses are seeing lots of good come from this new Tax Code.

Another example is a delivery driver from Kent, Washington, who works for one of these small, local companies. He shared that just 2 weeks after the tax reform bill passed, his boss gave everyone in that company a raise.

These are encouraging stories from real people living real lives across Washington State. They are hard-working people who see substantial benefits, thanks to tax reform.

RESPECT AND LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR

Mr. REICHERT. Mr. Speaker, I want to change topics just for a moment, if I can, and address an issue that is invading all across the country and our communities.

I was in law enforcement for 33 years before I came to Congress, and my job