

Consider that in a recent report on repair priorities, Transportation for America and Taxpayers for Common Sense found that even after the stimulus, “The percentage of roads nationwide in poor condition increased from 2009 to 2017.”

After we spent hundreds of billions of dollars on infrastructure, the percentage of roads nationwide in poor condition increased. That should tell you something is fundamentally wrong with our approach.

Strong Towns, an infrastructure resiliency organization, has argued for years that governments need to consider roads as liabilities, not assets, because they eventually must be replaced for large sums of money.

Yet, from 2009 to 2017, we collectively built 223,000 miles of new roads, enough new lane-miles to crisscross the entire country 83 times, which Repair Priorities estimates will cost another \$5 billion a year just to keep in good condition. Think about this: \$5 billion is about 11 percent of the current size of Federal highway spending.

As Strong Towns asks, if we devoted 100 percent of all government spending to repair, would we even have enough to maintain what we have already built? Probably not. Yet, States, with Federal dollars, are building more.

The principle here is that growth of the system creates a future cost to the system, which explains much of our current infrastructure funding crisis.

Third, and finally, we need to think innovatively about the Federal role in infrastructure. I often hear that our infrastructure spending and programs are stuck in the 1950s. If this is true, then we need to make sure that our infrastructure proposals aren't rehashing spending and regulatory regimes from the 1950s. If we keep putting the same broken inputs into the system, we can expect the same broken result.

The most obvious place to start is funding. We can't just raise the gas tax and throw hundreds of billions of dollars at the problem. That is particularly true if we don't have basic data on the scale of the problem. That is a 1950s way of thinking.

Even beyond the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure's Ranking Member SAM GRAVES' call for proposals transitioning to a vehicle-miles traveled tax, there are plenty of ways that we can think innovatively and escape the prison of the past.

One place to look is the permitting process. Countless billions of dollars are wasted in delays and ridiculous budget overruns caused by a regulatory maze of permitting.

The potential for savings here is tremendous. For example, The New York Times recently reported that it costs the city of New York nearly seven times the cost to build a rail project than similar projects almost anywhere—seven times. When considering that just the first phase of the Second Avenue Subway costs \$4.5 billion, even savings of 25 percent would be enor-

mous. There are enormous savings to be found in cutting down on delays and budget overruns.

President Trump's Executive Order No. 13807 streamlines the permitting process by designating one Federal agency as the lead rather than forcing project managers to navigate through a dozen agencies. This should be codified into law.

We also need commonsense reforms, like limiting the length of environmental impact statements to 150 pages, with a time limit of 2 years for their completion. It should not take 10 years to do an environmental review, and no human being is going to read a 3,000-page technical document. We hurt our environment more by dragging the permitting process out for years while more and more cars pile up in traffic.

Another innovative idea comes from our Australian allies. I am proud to chair the Friends of Australia Caucus with my good, Democrat friend, JOE COURTNEY. In 2014, Australia launched an Asset Recycling Initiative, a 5-year program that set aside \$3.3 billion in federal funding, which states could access if they sold or leased underutilized public assets to private firms. Money generated from sales or leasing was then reinvested into infrastructure projects at the state level. If states met certain criteria, the federal government would then match those revenues with an additional 15 percent.

Under asset recycling, the untapped value of America's underutilized infrastructure could be recaptured and then recycled into other urgent infrastructure needs. Our Nation has more infrastructure than any other nation, including China. Consequently, we have perhaps untold billions in value frozen in underutilized assets. Leasing or selling these assets to private firms would not only free up that value but also transfer the maintenance costs to private industry.

The potential benefits of this concept are enormous, especially if leveraged toward maintenance and repair of our existing system. In fact, the Trump administration championed this idea by proposing a Federal Incentives Program, setting aside \$100 billion to be granted to States and localities that could meet the criteria of asset recycling. The Trump plan proposed a 20 percent Federal match—even higher than Australia's 15 percent.

This was a promising idea that should not simply vanish because infrastructure talks broke down last year between the Speaker and the President. Since the essential problem in infrastructure is how to pay for it, the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure should include programs exactly like these in a future infrastructure package.

□ 1730

Now, I will close shortly. I can see my colleagues who are working on the modernization of Congress, which is essential to fixing the problems I am identifying, are waiting to speak.

But I will close by saying that I am a huge student and fan of Dwight Eisenhower. I spent 3 months of my life in Abilene, Kansas, staying at the Holiday Inn Express, doing research there—very exciting for a man in his twenties. But I like Ike, and I believe, like Ike, that the Federal Government has a role to play in infrastructure.

During the Eisenhower administration, in partnership with Canada, the United States built the Saint Lawrence Seaway. His most ambitious domestic project, the interstate highway program, created a 41,000-mile road system.

When I look at Wisconsin, I see the impact that world-class infrastructure has had in keeping us economically competitive, so there should be no doubt that we need infrastructure.

There should also be no doubt that the current way of delivering, funding, and planning for infrastructure is not working. It is time to bring the way we think about infrastructure into the 21st century.

By focusing on infrastructure transparency and reporting, by repairing what we have first before constructing anew, and by innovating the way we fund and construct infrastructure, we can finally build a sustainable 21st century foundation across the Nation, even as we await the coming of hoverboards and jetpacks.

Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON THE MODERNIZATION OF CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2019, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. KILMER) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. KILMER. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the subject of my Special Order.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. KILMER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to speak about the work of the Select Committee on the Modernization of Congress.

As chair, I am extremely proud of what the select committee has accomplished in the past year. I am also proud of how we have accomplished our work.

In addition to unanimously passing 45 recommendations to improve the way Congress works, the select committee is establishing a new and meaningful precedent for bipartisan collaboration.

For those watching on C-SPAN, your television is not broken. We are actually proving that it is possible for Members of Congress from both sides of

the aisle to sit down together, engage in tough discussions, listen and learn from one another, and reach consensus. And I am fortunate and grateful to serve on this committee with such thoughtful and dedicated Members, including Vice Chair TOM GRAVES, whom we will hear from later this evening.

The select committee's guiding principle is to make Congress work better so that the institution and its Members can better serve the American people. That simple but profound goal guides all of our work. It helps us identify institutional problems and develop helpful solutions.

Last year, we held hearings on important topics like improving transparency in Congress, bettering constituent engagement, cultivating staff diversity and retention, developing next-generation leadership, technology best practices used in the States, the congressional schedule and calendar, and rules and procedures.

We kicked off this year with two hearings on Article I of the Constitution. The first focused on restoring congressional capacity, and the second focused on debate and deliberation.

While this may not have set any ratings records on C-SPAN, the reality is these hearings actually helped us dig deeper into the many challenges facing Congress and helped us identify innovative solutions to have this institution function better on behalf of the American people. As we continue to examine the range of issues in our mandate, we are going to continue to listen closely to what our colleagues and staff have to say about making Congress work better for the American people.

Many Members and staff have generously devoted their time and knowledge to helping the select committee think about policies to modernize Congress. We are grateful for their support and thrilled by the amount of interest our House colleagues have expressed in our work.

If one thing is clear, it is this: The desire to make Congress a more effective and efficient institution is actually devoid of partisanship. Modernizing Congress helps all Members to do a better job on behalf of their constituents.

So far, the select committee has reported three sets of recommendations containing a total of 45 unanimously approved recommendations out of committee. The committee reports containing these recommendations were reported to the House today, pursuant to section 201(f)(2) of H. Res. 6, and will be made publicly available at govinfo.gov.

Our first set of recommendations was reported favorably by the select committee last May and focused on improving transparency in Congress. Transparency increases accountability and, ultimately, improves the way Congress serves the American people.

While a lot of legislative information is public, it is often not made available in a format that is easy to access or to

review or to digest. These recommendations address transparency and accessibility problems and encourage the continuous public posting of new legislative information, including bill status, committee votes, program authorizations, and lobbying disclosures.

Ultimately, it is the people who pay for the data Congress collects, so they should be able to access basic information about what Members of Congress do here, whether it is following a bill through the process, seeing how we vote in committee and on the floor, or tracking what bills Members of Congress sponsor and cosponsor. Improving public access to legislative data is wholly consistent with making Congress work better for the American people.

Our second set of 24 recommendations were reported favorably by the committee last July. These recommendations fit into four broad categories.

The first set updates policies governing House human resources and consolidates the many H.R.-related offices in the House into a one-stop shop to help Members and staff with questions about recruitment, retention, diversity, legal counsel, training, and benefits. These recommendations recognize that attracting and retaining a diverse and highly qualified workforce requires offering competitive benefits and a motivating work environment.

The second set overhauls the onboarding process for new Members and provides continuing education for all Members.

The select committee has heard a lot about how new Member orientation should be nonpartisan and should include courses emphasizing the necessity of civility and respect. Rather than divide new Members by party as soon as they arrive here for orientation, we should encourage more relationship building.

Whether at the start of someone's service or later, Members should also have the opportunity to continue learning best practices so they can better serve those they represent.

The third set of recommendations modernizes House technology resources and emphasizes quality IT services to reduce reliance on outside vendors, to leverage bulk purchasing power, and to save taxpayer dollars.

Congress has been described by one of our colleagues as an 18th century institution using 20th century technology to solve 21st century problems. To address that, we also recommend reestablishing and reenvisioning the Office of Technology Assessment to help Congress address modern science and technology challenges.

Our fourth set of recommendations establishes that all proceedings and functions of the House should be made accessible to all Americans.

This year, we celebrate the 30th anniversary of the signing of the Americans with Disabilities Act. While much

progress has been made, there is still a lot of work to do to ensure that Americans with disabilities do not face discrimination. Our recommendations seek to address the equal access challenges persons with disabilities face when working for, visiting, or interacting with Congress.

Before I continue and dive into some of the other work of the select committee, I want to invite my colleague and the vice chair of the committee, the gentleman from Georgia, TOM GRAVES, to say a few words.

TOM has been a terrific partner, and I value the way that he has approached this committee, approaching these as problems to be solved, not working to score political points and, like every member of this committee, has really had his oar in the water trying to move our effort forward.

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. GRAVES), and I invite him to say a few words.

Mr. GRAVES of Georgia. Madam Speaker, let me first thank Chairman KILMER for his great work. How he has led this committee has been remarkable and an example for all committees, so I thank him for that example.

Madam Speaker, I rise today not only to commend my good friend from Washington State, but to echo his remarks and also the pride and the joy that each of us on the committee share in the work that has been done.

I guess tonight I am representing the six Republican members of this completely bipartisan committee, and we have all committed to work together in a great way. So, on behalf of our side, I thank the chairman for his good work.

In the last year, as Mr. KILMER shared, we have passed 45 recommendations to make Congress work better for the American people. Now, he has highlighted the way we have worked together to get that job done, and I want to commend him for leading us in an environment of bipartisanship and true collaboration. It is through his commitment to success and thinking outside of the box that we have been able to break the mold and to get this job done. This is an opportunity that comes around about every couple of decades, and to see the work that the chairman has done and how he has led this committee is really a great thing to be a part of.

When the select committee first started, we chose to work together and combine our resources as one team. Instead of separating the staff and office by party line, we chose to just join together and work to get the job done as one team.

As Mr. KILMER often says: We decided to put the committee not in red jerseys and in blue jerseys but, instead, "fix Congress" jerseys. Thanks to him, this experiment has created a bipartisanship bond of trust and collaboration unlike anything I have seen in my 10 years here in Congress.

In fact, our committee was only supposed to last for 1 year, through 2019.

But thanks to the support of our colleagues throughout the House, from freshman Members to Republican Study Committee members, to House leadership in both parties, to the new Democrat members of that Caucus and many other caucuses, we were able to get our committee extended through the end of this Congress.

Now, I know I speak for both of us when I say that we are grateful for the opportunity to build on last year's work and dive a little bit deeper into the issues affecting the legislative branch. Every recommendation we make aims to strengthen the capacity of the House so that we can better serve all Americans.

Our goal is simple. It was something we set out early on in an early retreat that we had together. The goal is simple, but it is critical, and that is we are to make Congress work better for the American people. It is that simple but yet that critical.

So, as the chairman shared, our first round of transparency-focused recommendations in May aimed to "open up" Congress for the American people. The work we do here in Washington is for our constituents, and they should be able to easily access information about our votes, about the bills and who is lobbying Congress.

What happens here should just be a click away, as the chairman said a minute ago, just one click, one-stop shopping. We want to make sure that the American people can truly view the inner workings of Congress.

While exploring ways to improve transparency and access, we heard from many of our colleagues and staff about the need for better technology and better processes here in the House. This also included giving offices the flexibility to hire more staff and to meet the needs of their constituents, as it is individual in each and every office.

We also recommended creating a Congressional Leadership Academy to offer training for Members, not just any ordinary training, but professional development training, because each and every Member deserves that opportunity to better prepare themselves in how to manage their offices and better represent their districts.

Every day that we are here, we should be asking the questions and learning about the issues that matter most to our constituents. Continued learning is an important part and an important piece of our representation here in Congress.

Another one of our recommendations that I think is incredibly important is that Members of Congress should receive mandatory cybersecurity training. Now, this idea came from one of our colleagues on our Member listening day, Miss KATHLEEN RICE from New York. She has a bill that requires this practice, and it is something that we have pushed forward as a recommendation in the House. Congressional staff must undergo cybersecurity training,

so our thought is that Members of Congress should do the same.

In September, we held a hearing to discuss improving civility throughout the Halls of Congress. At times, it felt like we were going against the grain just a bit on this issue. Recommendations on civility and bipartisanship are not something that I think the American people have heard from much here in Congress, but I think that is why this committee's work matters so much.

Even during times of division, we have to find a path forward. We recommended creating a bipartisan, Members-only space here in the Capitol to encourage more collaboration across party lines and instituting biennial bipartisan retreats for Members and their families at the start of each Congress so that Members and their families can begin to get to know each other.

I have often said that the breakdown in civility and bipartisanship here in Washington is because of the breakdown in relationships; and, in fact, maybe it is because many relationships haven't even begun yet. So it is important that we can talk to each other but, most importantly, that we can listen to one another.

So when it comes to communicating, we recognize the importance of good, robust communication with the American people as well. That is why we recommended increasing opportunities for constituents to communicate with their Representatives and allowing for faster correspondence between our offices and our constituents.

□ 1745

Now, we aren't finished yet. We have more work to do before the year is over. And I can think of no better capstone to my legislative career than to leave Congress in better shape for future Representatives.

Through the partnership of this committee with the Committee on House Administration, we have crafted legislation that will turn our bipartisan recommendations into results. This ongoing work is so important because it is the first time a committee like ours has seen its work move through the legislative process in this way.

So, as I close, no idea is too big or too small, and we encourage everyone to continue sharing their ideas with us to reform Congress. Together, we are giving the House a roadmap for a brighter future, and it wouldn't be possible without the great leadership of Chairman KILMER.

Mr. KILMER. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his kind words and for his partnership. This has been a true partnership with every member of the committee, but I particularly appreciate Mr. GRAVES' leadership as our vice chair.

Madam Speaker, I want to just dive in a bit on where he ended, which is we are the first select committee in several decades to propose and adopt rec-

ommendations on a rolling basis. Put simply, when we have consensus, we move.

We are also the first select committee in recent history to introduce our recommendations as legislation, to ensure that they actually get implemented further on down the road.

We introduced legislation in December, H. Res. 756, that incorporates the first two sets of recommendations passed by the select committee, and we are expecting a committee markup soon.

The select committee unanimously approved a third set of recommendations in December, and those recommendations fit into three broad categories.

The first set emphasizes the necessity of civility and the importance of bipartisan collaboration in Congress. Select committee members believe that Congress is stronger when Members find ways to work together to solve problems, and civility is key to making Congress a more productive institution that better serves the American people. That is especially important now. And the select committee intends to continue pushing for improved civility through further recommendations.

The second set addresses various administrative inefficiencies in Congress: to update Member cosponsorship powers, procurement and bulk purchasing policies, the travel card program, and Member emergency preparedness training.

And the third set, modernize the House Franking Commission on mailing standards and its regulations governing all Member communications. The select committee worked closely with the Franking Commission to develop these recommendations, and we were pleased to see the Commission implement updated communication standards for Members in January. The new guidelines modernize franking rules by including digital communications, improving transparency, expediting the review process, and allowing for more seamless interaction with constituents across platforms.

As with our first two sets of recommendations, the select committee will introduce legislation that incorporates our third set of recommendations to ensure further implementation. We don't want to just make recommendations for the sake of making recommendations; we want to make recommendations that actually improve Congress and its function on behalf of the American people.

The select committee has accomplished a great deal in the past year, but there is still a lot more work to do. I believe I speak for all of the members of the committee when I say we are ready for that challenge. Our plan is to build on our success thus far and continue issuing recommendations over the next several months.

Working to build a more efficient and effective Congress that will better

serve the American people is a mission I am proud to lead, and I am lucky to lead this committee alongside Vice Chair TOM GRAVES, who has been a great and steadfast partner in this effort. I am lucky to have a terrific set of committee members who are working to make Congress function better on behalf of the American people.

Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. MULLIN (at the request of Mr. MCCARTHY) for today and the balance of the week on account of supporting his son's continuing recovery.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. KILMER. Madam Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 5 o'clock and 49 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Wednesday, February 26, 2020, at 10 a.m. for morning-hour debate.

EXPENDITURE REPORTS CONCERNING OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL

Reports concerning the foreign currencies and U.S. dollars utilized for Official Foreign Travel during the fourth quarter of 2019, pursuant to Public Law 95-384, are as follows:

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMITTEE ON FINANCIAL SERVICES, U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN OCT. 1 AND DEC. 31, 2019

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem ¹		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²
Daniel Lindholm	10/6	10/10	England & Malta		704.00						704.00
Phil Poe	10/6	10/12	England & Malta		704.00						704.00
Clement Abonyi, Jr.	10/9	10/10	Bahamas		397.00		2398.75		636.00		3431.75
Esther Kahng	10/9	10/10	Bahamas		397.00		2398.75		636.00		3431.75
Hon. Maxine Waters	10/10	10/10	Bahamas		238.00		2398.75		318.00		2954.75
Hon. Al Green	10/9	10/10	Bahamas		397.00		2398.75		636.00		3431.75
Committee total					2,837.00		9,595.00		2,226.00		14,658.00

¹ Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.

² If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.

HON. MAXINE WATERS, Feb. 5, 2020.

(AMENDED) REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS, U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN OCT. 1 AND DEC. 31, 2019

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem ¹		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²
Hon. Karen Bass *	9/30	10/1	Germany		284.62		(³)	*		924.21	1,208.83
	10/1	10/3	Djibouti		762.00			*		817.30	1,579.30
	10/3	10/4	Niger		358.00			*		208.00	566.00
	10/4	10/5	Burkina Faso		233.00			*		1,345.10	1,578.10
Janette Yarwood	9/30	10/1	Germany		284.62						284.62
	10/1	10/3	Djibouti		762.00		(³)				762.00
	10/3	10/4	Niger		358.00						358.00
	10/4	10/5	Burkina Faso		233.00						233.00
Hon. Ilhan Omar	9/30	10/1	Germany		284.62		(³)				284.62
	10/1	10/3	Djibouti		762.00						762.00
	10/3	10/4	Niger		358.00						358.00
	10/4	10/5	Burkina Faso		233.00						233.00
Hon. James Sensenbrenner **	**	**	Germany		163.46		**	**	**		163.46
Meghan Gallagher	9/30	10/1	Germany		284.62		(³)				284.62
	10/1	10/3	Djibouti		762.00						762.00
	10/3	10/4	Niger		358.00						358.00
	10/4	10/5	Burkina Faso		233.00						233.00
Corey Holmes	9/30	10/1	Germany		284.62		(³)				284.62
	10/1	10/3	Djibouti		762.00						762.00
	10/3	10/4	Niger		358.00						358.00
	10/4	10/5	Burkina Faso		233.00						233.00
Hon. Ami Bera *	9/29	9/30	Philippines		925.00		14,102.23	*		1,175.90	16,203.13
	9/30	10/2	Malaysia		522.50			*		311.42	833.92
	10/2	10/5	Singapore		699.00			*		1,037.00	1,736.00
Nikole Burroughs	9/29	9/30	Philippines		925.00		10,736.33				11,661.33
	9/30	10/2	Malaysia		522.50						522.50
	10/2	10/5	Singapore		699.00						699.00
Chad Obermiller	9/29	9/30	Philippines		925.00		10,736.33				11,661.33
	9/30	10/2	Malaysia		522.50						522.50
	10/2	10/5	Singapore		699.00						699.00
Hon. William Keating *	9/30	10/4	Portugal		2,130.00		7,180.73	*		1,746.00	11,056.73
**	**	**	Azores		**		**	**	**		**
Hon. David Cicilline	9/30	10/4	Portugal		2,130.00		2,916.73		**		5,046.73
	**	**	Azores		**		**	**	**		**
Hon. Juan Vargas	9/30	10/4	Portugal		2,130.00		4,697.93		**		6,827.93
	**	**	Azores		**		**	**	**		**
Gabrielle Gould	9/30	10/4	Portugal		2,130.00		2,364.03		**		4,494.03
	**	**	Azores		**		**	**	**		**
Hon. Gregory Meeks	9/30	10/1	The Bahamas		431.72		1,254.23				1,685.95
Hon. Abigail Spanberger	10/3	10/4	Afghanistan		66.00		12,266.03				12,332.03
	10/4	10/6	Jordan		704.01						704.01
Janice Kaguyutan	10/6	10/9	Colombia		983.00		2,641.00				3,624.00
	10/9	10/10	Curacao		300.00						300.00
	10/10	10/12	Trinidad and Tobago		754.00						754.00
Sajit Gandhi *	10/9	10/12	Pakistan		447.00		9,292.45	*		509.72	10,249.17
Theresa Lou	10/9	10/12	Pakistan		452.00		9,362.45				9,814.45
Mariana Cruz Munoz *	11/4	11/6	Guatemala		460.10		999.03	*		105.00	1,564.13
	11/6	11/10	Mexico		1,260.00						1,260.00
Alex Sadler	11/4	11/6	Guatemala		460.10		999.03				1,459.13
	11/6	11/10	Mexico		1,260.00						1,260.00
Lesley Warner *	11/2	11/10	Sudan		1,422.50		8,365.38	*		390.00	10,177.88
Taylor Redick	11/2	11/10	Sudan		1,422.50		8,365.38				9,787.88
John Stapleton	11/2	11/10	Sudan		1,422.50		8,365.38				9,787.88