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House of Representatives

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

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
November 16, 2021.

I hereby appoint the honorable TONY CÁRDENAS to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

NANCY PELOSI,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 4, 2021, 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 time equally allocated between the parties 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.

REAL 21ST CENTURY GROWTH

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

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, November 15, at about 3 o'clock in the afternoon, President Biden signed into law the bipartisan infrastructure bill, which, for a lot of us who have been serving around here, was an incredibly gratifying and important moment in terms of really finally getting this country ahead of the curve in terms of critical investments for infrastructure.

Last Wednesday night, I held a telephone townhall on the infrastructure bill because the House had passed the measure on November 5. We had 7,000 people on the call who were either on the phone or streaming in. Lots of questions, lots of excitement. Connecticut is obviously a State that has been settled really since the origins of our Nation and has some of the oldest infrastructure in the country.

Mr. Speaker, I would note, however, that some of the questions that came in said, Well, only 10 percent of the bill is for hard infrastructure, for surface transportation. What's up with that?

And I was joined by Don Shubert, who is the executive director of the Connecticut Construction Industries Association, who was quick to jump into the call and point out the fact that if you step back and look at this bill, it is a continuation of the last infrastructure bill which passed in 2015, the FAST Act, which passed on a bipartisan basis and was signed into law by President Obama, and was extended twice by President Trump.

Again, that baseline was kind of keeping the lights on for infrastructure. It was not, however, getting us ahead of the curve in terms of the changes that are happening in other countries around the world. And with the new money that was included in the bipartisan infrastructure bill, we are seeing a huge increase, both in roads and bridges, but also in rail, also in the electric grid, also in broadband, which is now critical for any economic development for small communities to be able to tell companies and businesses that they have high speed internet.

So what does that mean in terms of the State of Connecticut? It means that the roads and the bridges—which again is a big focus—got a 32 percent increase in terms of the State's allotment, which will flow through the State's Department of Transportation.

Some of the old bridges in our State—again, the largest vehicle bridge is the Gold Star Bridge, which is part of the I-95 corridor, has been getting a pounding since it was built in 1943. The northbound lane right now, quite frankly, is so compromised that large trucks are basically not given permits to travel across that bridge. Again, it is part of the Interstate Highway System. It is a \$250 million job.

This bill will make sure that that funding is there. It is a project labor agreement, so it is going to be union labor and apprenticeship programs incorporated into the work that is there.

Again, there are countless other small bridges, medium-size bridges in the district. There is a swing bridge over the Connecticut River in East Haddam, Connecticut, that was built 108 years ago that breaks down, interferes with boat traffic going up and down the Connecticut River, that now has got full funding and is slated for repairs.

Also, in terms of the rail piece, which is separate from roads and bridges, \$66 billion, a big investment in the Northeast Corridor. Across the Connecticut River, there is the Old Saybrook Bridge, which is 114 years old. Anyone who sails underneath it and sees, again, how fragile the supports are for that bridge, it is screaming out for repairs. That project now will be fully funded as a result of this legislation.

The Coast Guard Academy, which is in New London, Connecticut, is going to get \$53 million to repair the barracks and the dormitories. Again, anyone looking at the age of those buildings, which some of our future leaders for the Coast Guard are going to school there, is getting a long overdue upgrade. As well as a city pier in New London where the USS *Eagle*—which is the proud sort of flagship of the U.S. Coast Guard—will now be able to tie up to modern infrastructure that is there.

□ 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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There is a host of other smaller projects in Tolland and Windham Counties that are included in this package. Again, I would emphasize that the total funding amount is not what some of the stuff that is out there in the media in terms of small fractions for hard infrastructure. The fact is when you incorporate the FAST Act baseline that was passed in 2015, along with the bipartisan infrastructure funding on top of it, the roads and bridges is close to 40 percent of the package. It also includes increasing and boosting the electric grid; which as we convert to electric vehicle passenger traffic, as we convert to offshore wind, which is going to be transmitting voltage to the coastline, we need to have a stronger grid.

All of that is good jobs that is going to be, again, built-in, baked-in over the next five years. It is not going to create inflationary pressures because of the fact that, again, it is spread out over a period of time.

It was a great day for our country. We came together on a bipartisan basis to get this done and now we are ready for a real 21st century growth that will be beneficial to all communities large and small.

AMERICA'S ECONOMIC FIRESTORM

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

Mr. ARRINGTON. Mr. Speaker, I can't for the life of me understand why my Democrat colleagues insist on passing this multitrillion-dollar monstrosity of a tax-and-spend bill that not only I, but the American people believe will be an economic and societal disaster on so many levels.

Mr. Speaker, the American people have spoken in countless polls and surveys and elections, not just in Virginia, New York, and New Jersey, but in my State of Texas where House seats have flipped from Democrat to Republican for the first time ever. As recent as last week, a Democrat changed parties to Republican because they cannot explain the current policies that are destructive to the ends of recovery and support the American people's freedom and our way of life.

They said as clearly as they can: No more Big Government control over our lives. That is what they said in Virginia. No more socialist spending our country into bankruptcy. No more growing the government at the expense of our freedoms and our children's future.

Mr. Speaker, Virginia, a blue State, one-third of the electorate said the economy was their number one issue. Biden won that by 10 points. They voted for a Republican Governor. Two-thirds of the American people in recent polls have said that the Biden economic plans are bad and they have no confidence in his policies. They connect his policies with the current economic conditions. The majority of

Americans attribute the inflation to Biden's failed policies, just like they do the disastrous border and the debacle in Afghanistan and in the generic ballot. The generic ballot among registered voters, there is a 10-point spread, if the elections were held today, between Democrats and Republicans. That is the highest in 40 years ever recorded.

The American people are speaking and they are crying out to their country's leaders: Relent. Relent. But they have made the connection between the policies and the disastrous effects in their lives and in the life of their country.

Enhanced employment benefits, in other words, paying people more to be on unemployment than to be at work, coupled with wasteful partisan multitrillion-dollar spending packages under the guise of COVID relief have created an economic firestorm, runaway inflation.

Real wages, 7 of the 9 months this President has been in office, have gone down. Real wages have gone down. There has been an inflation surge to the point of double-digit inflation in the last month, which have put us, over the year, at a 30-year high.

Gas prices are up 50 percent. We are almost a million jobs short of what President Biden promised as a result of that blue State bailout that he called COVID relief. This is the solution that the Democrats are offering.

Let's raise prices even more and lower wages by taxing the American people.

Let's further extend our recession by chasing jobs overseas and putting the highest tax rates in the developed world on the job creators of the United States of America.

Let's burden small businesses with higher taxes and less people willing to work.

Let's drive labor participation further down by removing the work requirement.

Let's trap more people in poverty and the cycle of dependency on government by removing the incentives to work.

Let's wipe out 20 or 30 percent of the workforce by thrusting a Big Government mandate that is unconstitutional, overreaching, and would destroy any prospects for recovery.

Mr. Speaker, this was supposed to be about income inequality, but if you read the tax bill—and I don't know how my progressive colleagues can look the American people in the eyes with a straight face and say that this is not a swampy, special-interest package of the century, because they have tax breaks for the wealthy by raising the SALT deductions. They give tax breaks to green industry, to unions, to plaintiffs' attorneys, to media corporations. That is all legitimate. That is all true.

If you look close enough, that is what this is about. Not to mention they stuffed the stocking with early Christmas presents for progressives and political allies of the Democratic

Party—amnesty for 8 million people while our southern border is melting down; unionization of every employee, every employer, every State in the country; Obamacare subsidies for people making hundreds of thousands of dollars.

Mr. Speaker, the list is too long. I implore my Democrat colleagues to relent and stop this. Let's get back to work on behalf of the American people.

HONORING THE MEMORY OF BATOUL ALFADAWI

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

Ms. TLAIB. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of the memory of Batoul Alfadawi, a resident of Dearborn Heights in Michigan's 13th District.

Her life was tragically cut short at the age of 6 years old from a hit-and-run. Batoul was a sweet girl with a beautiful soul. She had a huge enthusiasm for life and a joyful spirit. Batoul loved learning, spending time with her family, and playing with her friends. I know her parents and six siblings will miss her immensely.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in paying tribute to the memory of Batoul, and please say a prayer for her family.

HONORING LIEUTENANT COLONEL ALEXANDER JEFFERSON

Ms. TLAIB. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in tribute to Lieutenant Colonel Alexander Jefferson whose heroic service as a Tuskegee Airman in World War II was recognized earlier this week in the rededication ceremony of Jefferson Field in our district.

I was proud to be there in his presence. It was also his 100th birthday. He is a graduate of Detroit public schools, like myself. Lieutenant Colonel Alexander Jefferson pursued a military career and completed pilot training at the Tuskegee Army Airfield.

As a fighter pilot with the Red Tail, 332nd Fighter Group 301st Fighter Squadron, his unit escorted bombers headfirst into the action, bravely providing protection from vicious enemy aircraft. They never lost a single plane.

Mr. Speaker, on August 12, 1944, Jefferson was shot down and captured by the Germans and kept as a prisoner of war for 9 months. Liberated by American forces on the 29th of April 1945 and discharged from Active Duty in 1947, he retired from the Reserves in 1969.

After serving, Lieutenant Colonel Jefferson then became a science teacher in Detroit, where he then retired in 1979. At his ceremony, my teacher in high school came up to me and said he was very proud of the accomplishment I had. He said, Guess what, Lieutenant Jefferson was my science teacher and my elementary teacher, and now seeing you up there, I know that he was part of creating that seed and creating more leadership and really strength within the city of Detroit.

Mr. Speaker, he has received numerous awards for his bravery, and I am