

for 100 years, performing outstanding work in engineering, construction, alternative project delivery, and service.

United Infrastructure Group, or UIG, was founded in 1924 by Frederick Triplett as a partnership named Small and Triplett Construction Company. The company began construction of its first bridge in Morristown, Tennessee, then continued in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, and the two Carolinas.

The company completed its first major bridge project in 1926 in Chester County, South Carolina, carrying SC-9 over the Catawba River to replace the existing ferry. For the next 20 years before his death, Frederick served as a pioneer in the bridge construction industry. His legacy continues in his two sons, Fred and Tom.

An innovator and inventor, Fred graduated from Clemson College in 1948 with a civil engineering degree and began working in his father's business. He was known for designing and building overhead gantry cranes used on bridge projects during the 1950s and the 1960s.

In 1976, he was named Employer of the Year for South Carolina for modifying a crane with hand controls to assist a disabled veteran and a former crane operator.

His other son, Tom, like his father, was respected by his contemporaries for his contributions to the construction industry and local, State, and Federal organizations, but one of his most memorable characteristics was being an avid American patriot. His legacy lives on with his son, Jim Triplett, who is an American patriot in his own right and is the current chief executive officer of the United Infrastructure Group, Inc.

Many in the industry regard Jim as a top professional in his field and one who has had a major impact on the highway industry in the Carolinas as a leader in bridge construction and design-build delivery for over 30 years. He began working for his father at age 9 in 1974. He received his bachelor of science in computer engineering from Clemson University in 1986. He practiced structural engineering with Ralph Whitehead & Associates until 1992, when he returned to work at United Contractors. In 1995, Jim acquired the majority interest of the company and later acquired several other former Triplett companies to unify the companies into a single entity.

The United Infrastructure Group prides itself on fostering growth and diversity in resources and disciplines by developing and motivating exceptional leaders in a Christian environment to achieve excellence by every standard of measure. Their commitment to not only producing excellent work but excellent people has left a lasting impact on South Carolina. The growth of their family business represents the heartbeat of the American Dream.

On behalf of the Fifth District of South Carolina, it is my most sincere

pleasure to recognize the United Infrastructure Group for 100 years of outstanding service. The United Infrastructure Group and the Triplett family have set the gold standard, a century of dedicated service and commitment for which they will long be remembered. For that, I hope you will all join me in celebrating this momentous occasion.

TEN YEARS OF SPENDING DYSFUNCTION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MOONEY) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MOONEY. Mr. Speaker, it is truly an honor to stand before you today as I reflect on my one decade of service representing West Virginia's Second Congressional District in the U.S. House of Representatives.

Over these 10 years, I have fought relentlessly to uphold the core conservative values that brought me to this Chamber, including securing our southern border, defending the Second Amendment, pro-life, and reining in the reckless spending of our tax dollars in Washington. Today, I want to focus on that last point, our government's unsustainable spending habits.

□ 1130

Mr. Speaker, spending comes in two primary categories: mandatory and discretionary. Mandatory spending, which includes programs like Medicare and Social Security, occurs automatically, and it accounts for two-thirds of our Federal budget. To change these programs, Congress must act deliberately.

On the other hand, discretionary spending must be approved annually by Congress and fund the vital operations of Federal agencies like the Department of Defense.

The most fundamental responsibility of this body is to fund our government in a responsible manner and on time to 12 single-subject appropriations bills. Let me emphasize that: responsibly and on time. It is called the power of the purse, which the Constitution of the United States of America specifically gives only to this Chamber, the U.S. House of Representatives.

It is designed to protect the separation of powers so the President and the administration doesn't just do whatever they want with out-of-control regulations. In my State it was a war on coal, a war on guns, and onerous regulations that go after farmers and the construction industry. By passing the discretionary appropriations bills like we are supposed to, we can rein that in and stop it. That is our job. We should not delegate that or give that up.

As I wrap up my 10th year here in Congress, let's take a hard look at how we have handled spending over that time. When I was sworn in, in January of 2015, the national debt stood at about \$18 trillion. Today, it has doubled that and stands at \$36 trillion.

Worse still, the United States now spends more on interest for our debt than the entire annual defense budget which is \$822 billion.

Frankly, this is an astonishing failure of the responsibility of Congress on both sides of the aisle. This out-of-control and growing debt is a failure to live up to the mandate we were elected to fulfill.

Congress has chosen to abandon the basic function of passing timely spending bills. We have an entire year to prepare, negotiate, debate, and pass these 12 bills, but too often we just don't do it. In my 10 years in Congress, on this chart in red, Congress has passed 34 temporary stopgap measures known as continuing resolutions. One is coming up next week because we did not do our work. By doing that, we surrender the power of the purse.

In the entire span of my service here in Congress, just two times, in 2 years, in 2017 and 2019, Congress passed the spending bills on time. In 2017, we passed only one. In 2019, we passed five. We saw a partial government shutdown because Democrats refused to help President Trump secure the border.

Each time we fail to pass spending bills on time, we kick the can down the road and leave the American people with bloated omnibus packages that are, frankly, an insult to the responsible budgeting that our Nation deserves.

When we do pass it, the game is the Senate Democrats essentially filibuster it, causing a government shutdown and trying to blame the House Republicans for it. This is political bullying. We need to stand up to this tactic. It is just not right.

The American people gave Republicans a resounding mandate for change. We have been entrusted with unified control of government, and that means one thing: cutting wasteful spending and doing our jobs on time. It is another travesty for Members of Congress to continue to vote for reckless, unsustainable spending when it is our children and our grandchildren who will bear the burden of this debt long after we are gone.

I was actually a Hill staffer here in 1994 in the Republican Revolution. In 1995, Newt Gingrich became Speaker of the House. We passed all 12 single-subject spending bills like we were supposed to. We actually did it. It has only been in the last 20 to 25 years in this country where we failed to do that. From George Washington and the founding of America until about 20 years ago, standard process was to actually pass our spending bills.

What we are doing now is weird. It is wrong. It is not normal at all. It is because of these bullying tactics from the Senate because they get what they want. If they shut down government and try to blame us and we cave in, they get everything they want: no border security, transsexual sex change operations in the military. They get everything they want if they try to

shut down government. We must stand up to this.

To the Members of the incoming 119th Congress, which I will no longer be a part of, it is time to control spending and reclaim that power of the purse before it is too late.

PRESSING ISSUES FOR AMERICA'S SMALL BUSINESSES

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, we know that small businesses are really the cornerstone of the American economy. Entry-level jobs and the corner mom-and-pop stores are what really make a town, a small town, or a neighborhood work well. Yet, the regulations that are being heaped upon them make it just about impossible for them to go much further to remain in business. Year after year there are more costs, more paperwork, more things that just make it more enticing to retire or go out of business.

Federal regulations play a big part in that. In my home State of California, State regulations heaped upon them play a big role, as well. So what do we get? Some of the bad ideas that come out of California are emulated here.

We had a bill called AB5, also known as the ABC worker classification rules. What happens? That starts affecting what they call gig workers or people who are contractors but they are trying to corral them into being employees mainly so they can be unionized. That isn't it at all.

Then what happens? AB5 passes in California and messes things up for a while. They have to pass another law to straighten out some part of it including things like Uber rides and Lyft and things like that. They got an exemption for them. There are a lot of other people who have not gotten that exemption.

In D.C., in Congress, after watching that mess, after having something at least partially corrected that didn't work well, they wanted to emulate that with something called the PRO Act here last Congress. They want to keep on adding more and more to that burden.

What we see, again, in my home State of California is our resources board came up with more and more emissions rules on vehicles. We are not talking about being against clean air and having more efficient vehicles. That comes from the marketplace. It comes from technology advancing, as it can, instead of State mandates saying that we will just force you to electrify all vehicles by 2035 or 2040 or 2045 or whatever round number fits the narrative that day for a date and time.

We see that CARB is just choking off so much for small businesses and for trucking. Trucking is essential to get finished products to the store shelves and so much of the inputs to a farm or to a factory, for example.

A lot of times a ship will bring things into port. A train might move it a long way or the truck might move it di-

rectly to where it is needed in manufacturing or processing and then it is brought to your store shelves.

Well, those prices just keep going up because they force more and more mandates on trucks and on locomotives. The technology doesn't even exist or certainly hasn't been perfected yet on those diesel engines. Diesel does power the country, like it or not. It will do so for a long, long time.

The mandates that they place at CARB are making it so much more expensive. At some point we might have to go a few weeks without food and other issues, other supplies being on the shelves to finally get the point across that truckers can't do it anymore in my home State.

You see what farmers go through with trying to comply with water supply issues where more and more water is being pushed toward environmental water and less toward farming and growing food in my home State.

The San Joaquin Valley has been devastated over 2 years with the water being taken away and flushed out to the delta. It supposedly helped something called the delta smelt or so-called saltwater intrusion coming up to the bay and salting the water that gets farther inland.

They don't need nearly the amount of water that is wasted and is going through the delta and out to the ocean to take care of some of those problems.

Indeed, the municipalities around the delta need to look at how much effluent they are putting into the delta, into that estuary, or into the ocean directly by not having cleaned up their act with the effluent coming out of the sewer treatment plant, sometimes just straight sewer. The regulations are needed on the city folks and not on the farmers and not taking away the water.

What I am talking about is that these small businesses like farms, like downtown, like trucking companies, like all that are being devastated by regulations. A lot of them start in my home State of California but then are emulated here in Washington, D.C.

Mr. Speaker, so often it seems that one hasn't even talked to the other about how the rules would be effective, how they would actually be devastating, or how they would be implemented in a way that isn't hurtful.

Government is supposed to help the people. Government is supposed to help people whether they are the ones being protected by these so-called polluters or the ones who need to receive the products that they are making. Business is a big part of that.

If we don't allow these people to be in business, then those jobs will be exported. We will import everything from China at lower quality. We need relief from that at the Federal level, as well as the State level, from this regulatory overreach.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair

declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 11 o'clock and 39 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at noon.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Margaret Grun Kibben, offered the following prayer:

Creator God, You have privileged us with the mandate to sow seeds of peace and love, justice and mercy. You, who are the source of all life, have entrusted us with the care for one another in the time we share together on this great Earth.

On these men and women in these Chambers You have laid the mantle of governance and leadership, calling on them to be wise in the sowing of wisdom, careful in the establishment of laws, discerning when making choices which will direct the future of our Nation.

As they bear the concerns of their constituents, give them both clarity and conscientiousness. May they aim for civility and not division.

May all of us who gather in this place who labor for both the welfare of our country and the common good of its citizens reap the joy of our labors and the fruit of our faithfulness as we each seek to be good stewards of Your generous bounty.

With the guidance of Your spirit to lead us this day, we offer our prayer in Your sovereign name.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House the approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1 of rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands (Ms. PLASKETT) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. PLASKETT led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will entertain up to 15 requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.