

community and in every bustling community across this Nation, families pull up to the gas tank, fill their tank with gas, and pay 18 cents a gallon to the Federal Government for transportation projects. But, unfortunately, each year Congress has allocated nearly a third less of the money than they have paid for the transportation projects.

Many of us stood up against that last year, even in the budget. We would not vote for the general budget, and we would not vote for the transportation budget, because the plan was to take \$65 billion out of the money that was to come back to the communities for their safe roads, and we held out.

Today we are going to have a vote to put the money back. We are going to have a vote to put the money back into communities for safe roads. Anybody who says they are for families and does not do something about the transportation projects is dooming them to spending hours in their cars instead of being home with their families.

The vote today is good. It is about the projects our communities need; about projects they need to keep their families safe and which will allow them to spend time with their families.

PRIORITY LEGISLATION NOT BEING PASSED

(Ms. DELAURO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, when the gentleman from Georgia (Speaker GINGRICH) promised a fair and open debate on campaign finance reform, it must have been an April Fools' joke. Unfortunately, it was not the only joke the GOP has played on the American people.

In the 40 legislative days that this body has been in session this year, the House has failed to pass bills that the Republican leadership claimed were priorities. The American people have had no disaster relief, no IRS reform, no budget resolution and no campaign finance reform.

□ 1015

In addition, the Republicans have completely ignored other issues that the American public are clamoring for action on. They have had no managed care reform, and there is bipartisan support for managed care reform, no bills to improve our public schools, and no minimum wage increase.

Mr. Speaker, I only wish I could say this was an April Fools' joke. But it looks like the joke is on us and the American people.

BESTEIA WILL CREATE JOBS, KEEP NATION COMPETITIVE, AND SAVE LIVES

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

Mr. LATOURETTE. Mr. Speaker, over 40 years ago, President Eisenhower made a deal with the American public. If folks would pay gasoline taxes when they bought gas, the government would build and maintain highways so that they could travel to work, so that we could maintain our position in the world and move goods to market, and so that Americans could travel with their families on safe transportation systems.

Sadly, during the 1960s, when the unified budget was used to hide the cost of the Vietnam conflict, the trust fund, and I want to emphasize the word "trust" fund, was used to mask the size of that overspending. Since that time, we have failed to keep faith with the Americans who pay the tax with the expectation that we will keep that deal made so long ago.

Today, we have the opportunity to keep the contract with the American public by passing BESTEA. BESTEA will create jobs, it will keep our Nation competitive, and it will save lives.

Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, there is criticism in some quarters that BESTEA falls outside the budget deal of last year. The Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure has worked hard to make sure that BESTEA not only comes within those budget caps but also restores truth in budgeting. It says that the Highway Trust Fund is a contract with the American people, and today we in this House must force Washington to keep its end of the bargain.

PASS BESTEA BILL AND INVEST IN NATION'S ECONOMY

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

Mr. MASCARA. Mr. Speaker, one thing that get lost in the debate on BESTEA is the importance of our Nation's highway system. Nearly \$6 trillion worth of goods are shipped each year over our country's highways. Seventy-five percent of the total value of our Nation's commodities are shipped interstate over our national highway system.

Our economy depends heavily on our transportation system. Yet we are watching it while it crumbles. Our country has long neglected its infrastructure needs. The condition of our roads and highways continue to decline.

The Department of Transportation estimates that 59 percent of the Nation's highways are in disrepair. These road conditions, poor road conditions, cost American drivers over \$23 billion a year, or equivalent to \$132 for each driver.

Traffic on our highways has more than doubled in the past 25 years, while new road construction has stagnated. It is time to invest in our Nation's infrastructure. It is time to fix our roads. Join me in voting for H.R. 2400 and invest in our Nation's economy.

DOLLARS TO THE CLASSROOM

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

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, can we talk about education in this country without talking about the most important recipients of education, our kids? Someone should explain to us how Federal studies like "Channeling Your Donna Reed Syndrome" or "Cement, the Concrete Experience", even studies on researchers researching their research techniques have anything to do with kids learning their ABCs or basic skills. This is exactly the kind of waste that is produced in the bloated bureaucracy here in Washington, D.C.

Mr. Speaker, instead of sending our Federal tax dollars to parents, teachers and local educators, the dollars get lost in the abyss of the bureaucracy and on Federal studies. The Committee on Education and the Workforce estimates that, on the average, only 65 cents of every Federal education dollar gets into the classroom.

We now have the opportunity to send our Federal education tax dollars directly to the classrooms of the Nation. The Dollars to the Classroom Act ensures that 95 cents of every Federal education dollar goes directly to the classroom, to the hands of someone who knows your child's name. Mr. Speaker, this means microscopes, computers, books and not bureaucrats. Let us send the dollars to the classroom.

DEMOCRATS UNVEIL MANAGED CARE REFORM LEGISLATION

(Mr. PALLONE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, today is April Fool's Day; and so it seems appropriate that the Republican leadership is having a rally to celebrate the achievements of the GOP Congress before Members leave Washington for the recess.

The Republican Congress has simply wasted time in 1998, producing no results to improve the lives of the average working American. Important issues like managed care reform, Medicare expansion for those 55 to 64, a minimum wage increase, school modernization and reduced class size have simply been neglected.

Democrats and President Clinton have prioritized these issues because they know they are important to the American people and will improve the quality of their lives. Just yesterday, Democrats unveiled their managed care reform legislative proposal with President Clinton's strong backing. But the Republican leadership, they just want to go home. They are incapable of addressing the issues of real concern to working Americans.

SUPPORT THE BESTEA BILL

(Mrs. KELLY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1

minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. KELLY. Mr. Speaker, later today this body will consider the BESTEA bill. This bill provides the necessary resources to improve America's aging and decrepit infrastructure.

While today we will hear discussions of roads and transit and funding formulas, I want to point out a lesser-known feature of this important bill, environmental enhancements. BESTEA significantly increases funding for the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality program, for the transportation enhancements program, and for the recreational trails program. The measure creates new transit enhancement programs and encourages alternative modes of transportation such as biking. In fact, BESTEA even works to improve compliance with the Clean Air Act.

Mr. Speaker, this bill proves we can balance America's economic and environmental needs. For the environment, for highway safety, for job growth and for infrastructure improvements, I am a strong supporter of this bill; and I hope my colleagues will join me with their support.

LET US HAVE FAIR COMPETITION IN THE ELECTRIC POWER INDUSTRY

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

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, with all the talk about the supposed benefits of competition in the electric power industry, I say let us have really fair electric competition.

Many consumers now enjoy the benefits of a municipally owned electric system, such as low rates and high standards and open governance and direct corporate democracy. Private power marketers should have to be as democratic and open as public power. This means they should;

First, comply with State and local open meeting laws;

Second, provide for a publicly elected board of directors;

Third, permit the public election of all chief executive officers;

Fourth, hold public hearings on budgets;

Fifth, require compliance with State and local government conflict of interest regulations; and

Sixth, not deduct advertising expenses from their income taxes.

Really competitive power marketers would put into practice the high democratic standards of public power.

MUGGED BY REALITY

(Mr. BOB SCHAFFER of Colorado asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BOB SCHAFFER of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, the intellectual evolution in the typical American's political life

usually takes several years. Now, most people start out relatively liberal; but they eventually see the error of their ways and become more conservative upon realizing that left-wing programs simply do not work. In the famous phrase, they are mugged by reality.

But there is one way to speed up the process. It is an event that almost 100 percent will guarantee success. Take a liberal, subject him to an IRS audit and presto, you soon hear some very conservative thoughts coming out of their mouths. All of a sudden, their beloved Federal Government is no longer seen as their friend. All of a sudden, the Federal Government now looks like the last place to look for fairness. All of a sudden, dealing with a massive Federal bureaucracy is not such a wonderful, wholesome experience after all; and all of a sudden, what looks so great in the abstract starts to look silly, illogical, out of touch and quite menacing indeed when reality hits.

Mr. Speaker, it is an obvious truth that if liberals were audited by the IRS, the Democrat Party would cease to exist almost overnight.

VOTE YES ON H.R. 1151, CREDIT UNION ACCESS BILL

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

Mr. KANJORSKI. Mr. Speaker, today one out of four Americans will have an opportunity to keep their eye on the House of Representatives as we will have an opportunity to take up H.R. 1151, the Credit Union Access Bill which will allow 70 million Americans to exercise their right of choice for financial services in this country.

I want to compliment the 207 sponsors and cosponsors on both sides of the aisle of this legislation. I further want to compliment the bipartisan spirit of the Speaker, the minority leader and minority whip, Mr. BONIOR, who sponsored the bill, the chairman of the Committee on Rules and, most particularly, the chairman and the ranking member of the Committee on Banking and Financial Services who, working together, have shown what a bipartisan effort can do in the House of Representatives when the job has to get done.

Today, as we pass under suspension H.R. 1151 and send it on to the Senate, we will be performing an act that is truly American in the best spirit of the cooperative movement of the credit union movement of America. All I ask is all my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to express their aid and assistance for the credit union movement by voting yes on H.R. 1151.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 2400, BUILDING EFFICIENT SURFACE TRANSPORTATION AND EQUITY ACT OF 1998

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call

up House Resolution 405 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 405

Resolved, That at any time after the adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 1(b) of rule XXIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 2400) to authorize funds for Federal-aid highways, highway safety programs, and transit programs, and for other purposes. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and the amendments made in order by this resolution and shall not exceed two hours and 30 minutes, with two hours equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and 30 minutes equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Ways and Means. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. It shall be in order to consider as an original bill for the purpose of amendment under the five-minute rule the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure now printed in the bill, modified by the amendment recommended by the Committee on Ways and Means now printed in the bill and the amendment printed in part 1 of the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution. That amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be considered as read. All points of order against that amendment in the nature of a substitute are waived. No amendment to that amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be in order except those printed in part 2 of the report of the Committee on Rules. Each amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the first time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question in the House or in the Committee of the Whole. All points of order against the amendments printed in the report are waived. The chairman of the Committee of the Whole may: (1) postpone until a time during further consideration in the Committee of the Whole a request for a recorded vote on any amendment; and (2) reduce to five minutes the minimum time for electronic voting on any postponed question that follows another electronic vote without intervening business, provided that the minimum time for electronic voting on the first in any series of questions shall be 15 minutes. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. Any Member may demand a separate vote in the House on any amendment adopted in the Committee of the Whole to the bill or to the amendment in the nature of a substitute made in order as original text. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HEFLEY). The gentleman from California (Mr. DREIER) is recognized for 1 hour.