

IN OPPOSITION TO THE RULE ON
H.R. 5021

HON. EARL BLUMENAUER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 15, 2015

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I would like to submit the following statement I made last year on the Rule on H.R. 5021:

I listened carefully to what you said, and you are right—this closed rule is a disservice. My respected friend from Florida, I think, is just wrong.

Mr. Speaker, this is not a solution, and it is not a deliberate, thoughtful process. We have not had a single hearing on transportation finance in the Ways and Means Committee all year. We didn't have one the year before that. We haven't had a hearing in the 43 months that Republicans have been in charge.

This is a perfectly predictable problem that was created by the halfhearted bill that they passed last Congress. We knew this was coming for months. Now we are here.

With all due respect, I, too, am disappointed that we have a rule that does not make in order broad discussion and amendment. We have been unable in this Congress to deal meaningfully with the looming transportation crisis.

The gentleman is on the Transportation Committee. He doesn't have a bill. We are almost through this Congress, and we don't have a bill. America is falling apart. America is falling behind. We have failed to give America's communities the resources and a robust 6-year reauthorization plan.

We have done it before under the chairmanship of Bud Shuster and Ranking Member Jim Oberstar, and I was happy to have played a small role. That bill made a difference.

If we fail to come to grips with the funding level and, instead, in approving this rule and the underlying bill, this Congress is giving itself a ticket out of town to adjourn and pass it on to not just the next Congress but to the Congress after that. Make no mistake. In May 2015, you are not going to be in any different a place. It is going to be May 2017.

Congress has legitimate policy differences. I appreciate my friend from New Jersey. Some people think that the Federal Government should get out of the partnership that we have had and reduce or eliminate the Federal gas tax.

They are willing to give up on the successful partnership and let each State decide what to do, when it wants to do it, or what it is able or not able to do. They would abandon all sense of a national vision and the ability to shape transportation policies. That is rejected by the mayors, rejected by county commissioners, rejected by State transportation officials. They want that partnership.

Frankly, there are some people who feel the gas tax ought to be adjusted to deal with inflation and increased fuel economy as well as the demands of a growing Nation with an aging infrastructure.

Some people are comfortable with the Republican budget, which will have no new projects for 15 months and will doom us to a 30 percent reduction over the next 10 years.

Those are legitimate policy differences, but we are not dealing with them here on the floor. We are shrugging our shoulders, passing them on to the next Congress and, frankly, to the Congress after that.

I agree with the people who build and maintain and use our transportation infrastructure. We should address this infrastruc-

ture question head on. American infrastructure used to be the best in the world and a point of pride, bringing Americans together. It is now a source of embarrassment and deep concern as we fall further and further behind global leaders.

We ought to reject this rule. We ought to allow full debate and, by all means, resolve the funding question now so we can go forward. America deserves no less.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE INTRODUCTION OF THE COMMISSION ON AMERICANS LIVING ABROAD ACT OF 2015

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 15, 2015

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, there are an estimated 6–8 million constituents scattered across the world who promote our culture and values while strengthening our nation's global influence as they live and work abroad. For years I have worked to ensure that overseas Americans can fully exercise their rights as U.S. citizens by having their voices heard loud and clear by Congress. Eight years ago, I formed the Congressional Americans Abroad Caucus because I wanted to bring awareness and focus to the concerns of those residing abroad. U.S. citizens remain just that, citizens, regardless of where they choose to live and should not be ignored by virtue of residence.

Our constituents living and working abroad have consistently voiced concerns about the impact federal policies have on the issues directly affecting them like voting, immigration, access to financial institutions, and taxation. The time has come to take a look at the importance of federal policies for our overseas community rather than continuing to ignore the calls from our abroad constituents. That is why today I am introducing the Commission on Americans Living Abroad Act, which creates an Executive Commission with the main purpose of examining those concerns. The Commission creates a 10 member panel to examine the impact of federal policymaking on U.S. citizens abroad. The resulting study would then be used by Congress and the Executive Branch when considering the best steps we can take to engage the abroad community and ensure their voices are heard. This process will ensure clearer awareness of the federal issues impacting Americans abroad and will open a path for coordination with those communities towards more robust representation.

We must take a real and comprehensive look at how we, as Members of Congress, respond to U.S. citizens living abroad. Each of our constituents has a right to have their interests represented and to have a role in the political process. The Commission on Americans Living Abroad would establish a foundation from which we can work to better serve the needs of our global constituents. I welcome and urge my colleagues to lend their support to this bill.

HONORING THE LIFE OF NORMAN
BUCHERT

HON. TED LIEU

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 15, 2015

Mr. TED LIEU of California. Mr. Speaker. I rise today to honor the life and legacy of Mr. Norman Buchert, a loving family man and successful engineer. Upon graduating from the University of Florida, Norman began working in a nascent aerospace industry at the Kennedy Space Center, contributing to the development of the Apollo 11 launch and other space shuttle launches. Throughout his life he loved to tell stories about his time working in the space program.

While Norman's career as an engineer is remarkable, his role as a loving family man is what he will be remembered for most. I have had the privilege of working closely with his daughter, Genelle, who truly embodies his caring spirit. He has left a positive mark on our world and that his legacy will live on through his family.

Mr. Speaker, I know that my colleagues will join with me in honoring the life of this special man. We should all be so fortunate to live such a full life. I submit his obituary:

Norman Charles Buchert was born in Cincinnati, Ohio on May 13, 1942. He graduated from Port St. Joe High School, Port St. Joe, Florida; and from the University of Florida with a BS and MS in Electrical Engineering.

His career began at Kennedy Space Center on January 27th, 1967 with North American Aviation (NAA) as an RF and Telemetry Engineer working on the Apollo/Saturn Launch Vehicle second stage. He then worked on the Saturn V moon launches including the Apollo II launch to the moon (and back) and worked in the Saturn V Launch Control Center Firing room at the RF and Telemetry console. He later transferred to the Apollo Command and Service Module (CSM) organization to work on the experiments that the CSM carried to the moon and the Lunar Sounder experiment searching for water on the moon. Their first daughter, Genelle, was born shortly after man's first walk on the moon. Twenty two months later their second daughter, Charisse, was born.

In 1972, he began work as a Space Shuttle design integration engineer in Downey, California for NAA. In 1975, their third daughter, Felicia, was born. That same year he transferred back to KSC to help design, manufacture and install the Orbiter Processing Facility Communications and Tracking checkout station. In 1984, they welcomed their youngest daughter, April. Promoted to Supervisor of the NAA Communications and Tracking group, he supervised the checkout of the first Shuttle launch Orbiter Communications and NavAids Systems eventually becoming the Director of Advanced Programs and Business Development for Rockwell (formerly NAA) at KSC. After Boeing purchased the Space Division portion of Rockwell in 1996, Norman became the Director of Advanced Engineering for the Space Shuttle Program finishing his career in this capacity. Norman received many awards and recognitions including the Astronaut Snoopy award for his work on the Apollo Program presented by Apollo astronaut, Hank Hartsfield.

Norman worked for Boeing for over 44 years; was an avid University of Florida Gator sports fan; enjoyed talking about his experiences in the space program as a KSC