

for Fairness, fake Astroturf groups actually funded by Airlines for America. In fact, this Flyers for Fairness is pretty funny.

A guy named Alan Clendenin is the head of it. He won't say who finances the group. He is a former air traffic controller who vehemently opposed privatization as recently as June and now chairs this citizen group and is being paid a handsome salary by whom? I wonder.

Now, here is the big problem with their argument. We have the most recent statistics on delays. Normally, the biggest cause of delays is weather. They would have you believe it is the air traffic system. It is not. In fact, the number one cause of delays in the United States of America today is airline operations. So that is right; the airlines themselves, when they schedule 15 planes to take off at the same time at one airport, when the airport can only take off 1 plane a minute, that causes delays.

□ 1045

When they mess up their crews' schedules and they do other things, that causes delays. When they fly decrepit aircraft and they have maintenance issues, that causes delays. Forty-six percent of the delays in June were due to airline operations.

How is that going to be dealt with by privatizing the safest, largest, most complex, and sophisticated air traffic control system in the world?

The second largest cause, as you can see from the chart, is bad weather. Actually, the FAA has developed a way to help deal with that and more efficiently reroute planes called Data Comm, which is in all of our major airports now so we can deal with it. So we have cut down on weather delays about as much as we probably can. There are always going to be weather delays.

Then the ATC system itself, in fact, improvements are coming there with a very sophisticated electronic flight script, which will be in all of our control towers within 3 years. It is already in our en route centers. We are told that they are using paper strips. Well, the paper strips are actually infallible. They don't have computer malfunctions, unlike their reservation and dispatch systems which frequently strand travelers.

The FAA made a business decision to have a much more sophisticated form of electronic strip which will help sort out traffic at dispatch on the ground, given the routes they are going to take automatically, and reduce congestion at airports and reduce delays in the future.

So what would those private interests do differently?

The bottom line is they would profit from it. That is all. They wouldn't make it any better.

NATIONAL FLOOD INSURANCE

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

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, today I pose the question: Why do many people—too many—how many is too many?

The number that can have an adverse impact.

Why do too many people—not all—why do too many people deny the existence of circumstances that can have an invidious impact upon society? Why?

Why would people deny that there is a link between smoking and cancer?

Why would people deny that invidious discrimination existed when there were laws on the books that encouraged invidious discrimination?

Why would people deny the existence of climate change with all of the empirical evidence available to us to peruse and scrutinize? Why? Why, Mr. Speaker?

Because if you deny it, you don't have to do anything about it. If you deny the linkage between smoking and cancer, you don't have to do anything about it. If you deny the links between invidious discrimination and the impact on persons who are discriminated against, you don't have to do anything about it. If you deny that climate change exists, that there is something going on, then you don't have to do anything about it.

Mr. Speaker, notwithstanding denials, we have to acknowledge that, as of late, in Houston, Texas, we have had three major events—three major hurricanes—to have to cope with. And these three major events, while there may be some debate about whether they are 100-year floods or 500-year floods, everybody agrees that they are billion-dollar floods, plus, I might add, because the empirical evidence is there to support it.

With all of these hurricanes that are traversing the Atlantic Ocean and coming into landfall here in the United States, the frequency of them has to get our attention. So whether you think it is climate change or whether you think that these are acts of God—and the law recognizes such language—or whether you just can't explain it but you recognize that it is occurring, I think we have to do something about what is going on.

Mr. Speaker, we can no longer assume that the old normal is going to apply to our circumstances. There is a new normal that we have to cope with, and this new normal has much to do with how we will provide for the welfare and safety of the people of the United States of America.

How will we approach flood insurance?

The National Flood Insurance Program is in debt that we acknowledge to the tune of \$24.6 billion. That is what we acknowledge. But after Harvey and after what has happened recently in Florida and in the islands, Mr. Speaker, that number is going up exponentially.

If we are of the opinion that there is no climate change, this is just sort of a freak of nature that is occurring right

now and things will go back to the old normal and we just stay with that, then we won't take the necessary steps to provide flood insurance that is going to cover people so that they are not lost in a storm of red tape and bureaucracy.

We have to change the dynamics that relate to flood insurance in this country. We have to find a way to allow that \$24.6 billion that is going to go up exponentially to be properly resolved. It has to be eliminated.

Here is why: If you pass that on to the policyholders, then many people will not be able to afford flood insurance. If people can't afford flood insurance, then they are not going to be able to buy homes. If they can't buy homes, then we are going to have an impact on the economy.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, that it is time for us to do several things with flood insurance. One, resolve the issue of when versus flood as it relates to compensation for damages. Two, eliminate the debt. And, finally, I would say this: We have to, whether we like it or not, acknowledge that there is a new normal, especially after what has happened in Texas, Louisiana, Florida, and the territories.

I would also want to be specific about Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. Our prayers and thoughts are with them just as they are with those persons in Florida who have been harmed and the many persons across Texas, Louisiana, and other States.

This is our moment in time. This is our opportunity to make a difference. Let's acknowledge the change and make a change.

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 10 o'clock and 52 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 Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer:

Thank You, Dear Lord, for giving us another day.

As the difficult work of appropriations continues in the Congress, we ask Your blessing upon the Members and their staff who have done the detailed work to produce legislation for the government of our Nation. May their work be blessed with success to the benefit of all Americans.

Continue to bless those who are recovering from hurricane destruction