

2009, Congress has dedicated more than \$5.1 billion for multiple rounds of TIGER funding. In FY2015 alone, the program received \$10.1 billion in applications. That's twice the total amount of funding over a 10 year period in just a single fiscal year. The process is competitive, and it allows the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) to reward applicants that exceed eligibility criteria and demonstrate commitments to their projects.

By increasing these funding levels and removing the programs from the annual appropriations process, we will take the guesswork and uncertainty out of the programs. This in turn will allow communities around the country to submit funding requests for projects of national, regional, or metropolitan-area significance, including the construction and repair of roads, bridges, and tunnels, the installation of high speed internet, revitalization of drinking water infrastructure, and the construction and expansion of fixed-guideway public transportation systems, including subways, light rail, commuter rail, and bus rapid transit (BRT).

Madam Speaker, we have talked about prioritizing a large-scale infrastructure package for years. Last Congress, Congressional Democrats unveiled a trillion-dollar plan to make these investments and create tens of thousands of jobs. However, like so many other proposals, it was rejected out of hand by the Republican Majority. We need to get serious.

Every four years, the American Society of Civil Engineers' issues a "Report Card" for America's Infrastructure. The report depicts the condition and performance of American infrastructure, assigning letter grades based on the physical condition and needed investments for improvement across 16 major infrastructure categories. The most recent report card was issued last two years ago. Among the national rankings, transit systems were rated a D— and roads were rated a D.

Dams: D.  
Drinking water: D.  
Inland waterways: D.  
Levees: D.

We need to move this process forward. I urge my colleagues to consider my bill without delay, so that our country can begin making the investments it desperately needs.

INTRODUCTION OF THE STREAMLINED AND IMPROVED METHODS AT POLLING LOCATIONS AND EARLY VOTING ACT

**HON. STEVE COHEN**

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, January 3, 2019*

Mr. COHEN. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of the Streamlined and Improved Methods at Polling Locations and Early Voting Act, also known as the "SIMPLE" Voting Act for short that I introduced today.

This is a scary time for voting rights. We are witnessing an assault on voting rights the likes of which our nation has not seen since the passage of the Voting Rights Act in 1965. The President has alleged during the 2016 and 2018 election cycles, without evidence, that there is widespread voter fraud in our country.

In the name of protecting Americans from supposed in-person voter fraud—a fraud that

is virtually non-existent—states have been enacting voter ID laws. The real reason for these laws, however, has been anything but election integrity. It has been about partisan politics and discrimination.

But don't take my word for it. Take the words of legislators like the then-Pennsylvania House Majority Leader who boasted in 2012 that the state's newly enacted voter ID law would allow Mitt Romney to win his state. While speaking about his legislature's accomplishments, he said, "Voter ID, which is going to allow Governor Romney to win the state of Pennsylvania: done."

Or take the comments of a freshman Republican Wisconsin state representative who, while being interviewed ahead of the 2016 election, said, "And now we have photo ID, and I think photo ID is going to make a little bit of a difference as well."

Or take the word of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 4th Circuit which said that provisions of a voter ID law in North Carolina "target African Americans with almost surgical precision[.]" According to the court, the law imposed cures for problems that did not exist, and "thus the asserted justifications cannot and do not conceal the State's true motivation."

The right to vote is the cornerstone of our democracy. It is sacred. Yet, sadly, we have an ugly history in this nation of efforts to limit people's ability to access this constitutional right.

We need to make it easier for people to vote, not harder, and that is why I have introduced this bill today.

If enacted, the SIMPLE Voting Act would require states to allow early voting for federal elections for at least two weeks prior to election day, and to the greatest extent possible ensure that polling locations are within walking distance of a stop on a public transportation route.

It would also require that sufficient voting systems, poll workers and other election resources are provided, that wait times are fair and equitable for all voters across a state, and that no one be required to wait longer than one hour to cast a ballot at a polling place.

None of this should be controversial. This is all common sense, or at least should be, to those who to want help more Americans to vote.

I urge my colleagues to pass this bill.

IN RECOGNITION OF MR. PAUL STEWART

**HON. WILLIAM R. KEATING**

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, January 3, 2019*

Mr. KEATING. Madam Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Paul Stewart as he is inducted by the USA Hockey Association into the USA Hockey Hall of Fame.

Mr. Stewart was born and raised in Dorchester, Massachusetts, where he got his first pair of skates at age six, after borrowing his sister's figure skates too many times. He rose to playing in the National Hockey League for the Quebec Nordiques.

Transitioning from a career playing in the NHL to paving the way for American referees, Mr. Stewart became the first American to both

play and officiate in the National Hockey League. Following in the footsteps of his father and grandfather, he officiated his first game on March 27, 1986 in his hometown rink, the Boston Garden.

Players respected him, as he had a great respect for the players. He set an example for the future of NHL officiating and a new pathway for future referees. A testament to his strength and commitment came in the middle of his career, when he beat cancer and was back officiating within a year of his diagnosis. Outside of the regular season, Mr. Stewart officiated 49 Stanley Cup playoff games and two NHL All-Star games.

In 2003, Mr. Stewart became the first American born referee to officiate 1,000 NHL regular-season games. He finished out officiating his 1,010th and final game right where it all started, at home in Boston surrounded by family and friends.

After his trailblazing career on the ice, Mr. Stewart served as an ambassador for the NHL's Hockey Fights Cancer campaign. He also went on to be the director of the Bill Stewart Foundation, raising money for inner city youth sports, and the ECAC director of officiating, now working to break down barriers for women in the NHL. Following in the family profession, his two sons, McCauley and Maxwell, are both officiating hockey.

Madam Speaker, I am proud to honor Mr. Paul Stewart for his trailblazing efforts that have changed the future of the sport, and who now joins his grandfather in the USA Hockey Hall of Fame. I ask that my colleagues join me in recognizing his hard work and dedication.

RECOGNIZING THE LIFE OF RETIRED MISSISSIPPI JUDGE JOHN ANDREW HATCHER, JR.

**HON. TRENT KELLY**

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, January 3, 2019*

Mr. KELLY of Mississippi. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the retirement of one of Mississippi's most devoted citizens and public servants, the Honorable Judge John Andrew Hatcher, Jr. Judge Hatcher, a native of Sunflower, Mississippi, is retiring after a long and distinguished career.

Upon graduation from Drew High School in 1966, Judge Hatcher continued his education at Delta State University. After graduating in 1969, he attended the University of Mississippi School of Law where he received his Juris Doctorate. This began Judge Hatcher's impeccable legal career.

Judge Hatcher began practicing law in Booneville, Mississippi, in November 1973. He also took up teaching as he taught a paralegal program at Northeast Mississippi Community College. This led to a passion advocating for public service. Judge Hatcher served as the vice chairman of the Mississippi Council on Children from 1977 to 1979, the Housing Specialist with the Governor's Office of Federal, State and Local Programs, Division of Housing Coordinator from 1978 to 1979 and the Director of Yocona Area Council of Boy Scouts of America from 1979 to 1980.

Judge Hatcher went on to serve as the county prosecutor for Prentiss County, Mississippi, from 1980 to 1995. He also served as