

that doesn't make any sense if you talk to the people who are suffering today. I have heard from furloughed FBI agents, air traffic controllers, State Department officials, workers at TSA, the Department of Homeland Security, the Coast Guard, and even Customs and Border Patrol, and they all vehemently oppose the shutdown.

Madam Speaker, we all support effective border security, but keeping these people furloughed or making them work unpaid doesn't make us any safer.

But on the positive side, as the pain has gotten worse for our community, I have also seen something else, which is that communities are coming together to make sure that no one gets left behind. Business after business throughout the country and throughout northern Virginia are helping with free sandwiches, free meals, and free services.

Nonprofits are stepping up their efforts to meet the worsening conditions created by the shutdown, and government officials, furloughed and unfurloughed, are doing everything they can to pitch in and lighten the blow on their unpaid colleagues.

□ 1100

Yesterday, I was helping serve food to Federal employees at Chef Jose Andres' World Central Kitchen. There was a line around the block, and it was D.C. police officers on their lunch break who came to help serve.

By the way, Madam Speaker, I think I handed out more than 300 meals, and not a single person said: Open up the government. Give Trump his wall.

We are better than this. We are good, kind, and industrious. The American people don't deserve this shutdown.

It is axiomatic that we shouldn't negotiate with hostage takers, but the President has taken our government hostage. If we give him what he wants, he may well use this tactic again and again and again.

President Reagan said: "Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall."

We say: President Trump, tear down your wall—your unreasonable obsession with an obsolete, medieval, ineffective way to secure our borders—and open up our government.

NEED FOR INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. MALINOWSKI) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MALINOWSKI. Madam Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Transportation Funding Fairness Act and to express my hope that, after we have come to our senses and reopened the government, this year Congress will come together to fund the bridges, tunnels, railroads, airports, and roads that we all understand America needs to prosper and grow.

In the first decade of the 20th century, commuters in New Jersey towns like Summit, Union, and Westfield

could hop on a steam-powered train, ride right up to a terminal on the dock in Jersey City, change seamlessly to a ferry, and be in Manhattan within 50 minutes to an hour, if there wasn't too much fog or ice on the Hudson River.

A hundred years of magical, technological progress later, and we have managed to shave that trip by maybe a few minutes, if the trains are running on time that day.

Decades of underinvestment in public infrastructure have taken its toll on American greatness. Anyone who has traveled the world and has seen the modern airports and seaports and fast rail networks that our competitors are building would understand that.

Just in the last 2 months, as we have not even been able to open our government, the Chinese Government has been busy approving over \$125 billion in new rail projects—\$125 billion.

No State suffers more from our lack of attention to infrastructure than New Jersey, where twice as many people use public transportation than the national average. To get to and from New York, 200,000 of us a day still depend on just two rail tracks across the Portal Bridge and through a Hudson River tunnel that our great-grandparents built in 1910 because they thought those 50-minute, turn-of-the-century commute times were unacceptably long.

When the Portal Bridge opens to let boats pass today, a worker with a hammer must sometimes lock it back into place while stranded commuters wait, and that Hudson River tunnel has just a few years of life left. If we fail to replace it in time, we will be dealing a crippling blow to the economy of our region and our country.

That is why it is so urgent and important that we get the Gateway Tunnel project built.

Madam Speaker, in New Jersey, when we say we want to build bridges, not walls, that is not just a metaphor. We mean it literally. The \$5.7 billion that would be wasted to wall off America from Mexico happens to be almost exactly the Federal share of building a new Hudson River tunnel that would keep Americans connected to each other and, ultimately, to the world.

These are the real choices that we face. Is there any doubt what the voters who sent us here would have us choose: building something that millions of people living in my State and neighboring States say they desperately need, or something people living on the border say they do not need? A symbol of national progress, or a symbol of national fear? Is there any question at all?

That is one reason why I am introducing this bipartisan bill today, which is meant to clear one of the artificial obstacles the Department of Transportation has placed in the path of the Gateway Tunnel.

The Department has argued that when States take advantage of Federal transportation loans to pay some of

their share of projects jointly funded by the Federal Government, like Gateway, those loans don't count as part of the State contribution to the project.

It makes no sense. State taxpayers, after all, are 100 percent obligated to pay back those loans. It is like saying that I am not actually paying for my house because I have taken out a mortgage.

Our bill makes crystal clear that States can use Federal loans to cover all or part of their share of these projects.

Speaking of taxpayers, Madam Speaker, I represent a State where we get only 74 cents back from Washington for every dollar we pay in taxes. That is the worst ratio in the country. The average American gets \$1.12 back for every dollar he or she pays, courtesy of the Federal deficit.

What we ask, with strong justification, is that Washington give a bit more back in the form of investment in the infrastructure that powers States like New Jersey and, in turn, enables us to power the American economy.

I hope we will make progress on that this year and that this bill will make the task a little bit easier.

GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Washington (Ms. SCHRIER) for 5 minutes.

Ms. SCHRIER. Madam Speaker, yesterday marked 1 full month of this unnecessary government shutdown, and 800,000 Federal employees are set to miss their second paycheck later this week.

The shutdown is not only affecting those workers, but we are seeing ripple effects of agencies being closed or staff being downsized. Food banks are seeing massive increases, some almost twelve-fold, in demand from Federal employees, but also people who rely on help like Section 8 housing checks or SNAP benefits.

Here is some of what I am hearing. I heard from a constituent who is a career employee at the FAA that "it is frustrating that thousands of hard-working Federal employees have become innocent pawns in the current Washington standoff between Congress and the President over funding for border security. As an integral part of the Nation's air traffic control system, my focus has always been and will always be on safety."

He goes on: "My dedicated colleagues and I at the FAA work tirelessly in furtherance of the agency's mission of providing the safest, most efficient aerospace system in the world, despite some of us now doing so without pay."

I have also heard from a woman whose husband is a Federal agent at the FDA. "My question," she says, "is how are we going to make ends meet without a paycheck from my husband this Friday? We adopted our sweet son a year and a half ago, draining our savings account to do so. We currently do