

honor and recognition of the service of 53 years in the United States Congress.

John Conyers, throughout newspapers across America, is called a civil rights icon, a man who won reelection time after time with 80 percent of the vote.

I offer my deepest sympathy to his beautiful wife, Monica, and his sons, John and Carl, but most of all, I say to America: Those who are voiceless, John Conyers was there; but those who were silenced, who tried to be heard, John Conyers was there.

In every important piece of legislation for the last half century, John Conyers was there: voting rights, fair housing, the Clean Air Act, and the Clean Water Act.

Yes, he is an icon, but he is a person of this Nation. An honored servant and former military, he is to be honored, and I look forward to saluting him in days to come.

May he rest in peace.

VETERAN SUICIDE CRISIS

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

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, as we approach Veterans Day, I rise to bring awareness again to the alarming rate of veteran suicide.

This country owes all of our veterans and armed services personnel a limitless debt of gratitude for their sacrifices, so many that they made on our behalf. Our country simply wouldn't be the Nation it is today, of course, were it not for the many ways in which they have valiantly served.

Very sadly, veteran suicide remains an urgent crisis that devastates too many families across our Nation every single day. The statistics are staggering. We know now that we lose up to 6,000 veterans to this unspeakable tragedy every year.

For far too long, our country's brave men and women who fought abroad for our freedoms fall victim to suicide when they return home, and, of course, they leave families without fathers, mothers, brothers and sisters, sons and daughters.

There are few things more heart-breaking than to hear of another brave

soldier taking their own life, and we naturally ask the questions: How could this one have happened? Is there more that we could have done to intervene?

I just want to say this. Here in Congress, we have a moral obligation to ensure that our veterans are given top priority and the resources and quality healthcare they need and truly deserve.

We will continue to work on that priority. We will continue to advocate for all of those who served, and we will continue to draw attention to this terrible crisis in America.

May God bless and watch over all of our troops and all those who have served the call of freedom.

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INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING

(Ms. KAPTUR asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, today the House approved H.R. 2440, the Full Utilization of the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund Act of 2019. Nearly every segment of our Nation's infrastructure is in disrepair due to chronic underfunding, including our Nation's water infrastructure, a true lifeblood of our economy.

This year, as he did last year, President Trump proposed drastic cuts to the Army Corps of Engineers' budget. Unbelievable. But our Appropriations Committee rejected his proposals and those cuts. Today I stand with my colleagues on the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee to call for greater investment in our water infrastructure.

For our part, the House passed the FY20 Energy and Water Appropriations bill that included \$1.6 billion from the harbor maintenance trust fund, an increase of \$147 million above fiscal year 2019 and \$732 million above President Trump's paltry and unrealistic budget request.

Big, medium, and small ports across our country are efficient economic engines that anchor jobs and progress. They are hubs of production for communities everywhere. And, yes, they rely on leadership from this Congress to fund their maintenance.

I congratulate Representative DEFazio for his hard work in writing H.R.

2440 and hope we continue the momentum to utilize the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund Act.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD a letter from the Port of Cleveland.

PORT OF CLEVELAND,
October 28, 2019.

Hon. MARCY KAPTUR,
Congresswoman, 9th District of Ohio,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CONGRESSWOMAN KAPTUR: The Port of Cleveland is pleased to know that an important bill will be considered on the House floor on Monday, October 28. The bill, H.R. 2440, the Full Utilization of the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund, has bipartisan support on the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee and I urge your support for the measure.

As you know, the Port of Cleveland and others in our state depend on the Corps of Engineers' civil works program. Our port relies on the maintenance dredging work each and every year. Around \$8 million is needed every year to keep the Cuyahoga River Federal shipping channel, the port's breakwater and related infrastructure in a condition that enables the safe navigation of ships and mariners. Major American industry and U.S. exports rely on maintenance dredging that occurs twice each year.

Since 1986, when Congress created the Harbor Maintenance Tax (HMT) and Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund (HMTF), most cargo in American ports is charged an ad valorem tax for the purpose of covering Federal channel maintenance-related costs in U.S. seaports. In the first years, the tax revenue was fully spent on Federal channel maintenance but soon revenues increased and a surplus was allowed to accumulate in the trust fund, even as many shipping channels in the country were not fully maintained to their design depths and widths. Overtime, the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund balance has been allowed to grow to over \$9 billion while Congress has continued to under-spend on the infrastructure that is our national navigation system.

In more recent years, the House and Senate became more alert to the inadequately maintained American ports and the existence of the HMT and HMTF. Targets for maintenance spending were approved in WRDA 2014 and appropriations have increased. We ports have appreciated that improvement, but the fact is that the unused HMT revenue continues to accumulate while maintenance dredging in many parts of the country, including on the Great Lakes, is insufficient. The graph below, prepared in 2016, provides a snapshot of spending versus tax revenue. (In the years since, the trend is much the same with a projected HMTF balance (per FY 2020 budget) of as much as \$10.4 billion.

20 YEARS OF THE HARBOR MAINTENANCE TRUST FUND

[Dollars in millions]

HMTF Cash Flow:		1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
		Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual
BOY Balance		1,106	1,246	1,556	1,621	1,777	1,850	2,001	2,299	2,695	3,234
Receipts & Interest		651	607	767	816	730	737	946	1,102	1,337	1,427
Outlays		-511	-297	-702	-660	-657	-586	-648	-706	-798	-910
EOY Balance		1,246	1,556	1,621	1,777	1,850	2,001	2,299	2,695	3,234	3,751

HMTF Cash Flow:		2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
		Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Est.	Request
BOY Balance		3,751	4,559	5,003	5,474	6,280	6,958	7,806	8,316	8,684	9,064
Receipts & Interest		1,594	1,253	1,299	1,629	1,587	1,696	1,617	1,517	1,662	1,802
Outlays		-786	-808	-828	-823	-909	-848	-1,107	-1,149	-1,282	-986
EOY Balance		4,559	5,003	5,474	6,280	6,958	7,806	8,316	8,684	9,064	9,980

Again, these are collected taxes for which, by law, only authorized Federal navigation maintenance work is eligible. That the unspent balance has been allowed to accumulate and sit in the Federal Treasury as ballast against budget deficits is especially disturbing at a time when Congress and the White House have rightly talked about the importance of tending to the country's essential infrastructure. In the case of port channels, the money exists. That is an important consideration. No new revenue stream is required.

As a final note, and for clarity sake, this issue is unrelated to the funding of the inland waterway system. There vessels, including as tug and towboats, are charged an excise tax on fuel expenses. That revenue is accounted for in the Inland Waterways Trust Fund and is spent on construction work such as lock and dam improvements. It is noteworthy that unlike the case with the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund, the Inland Waterways Trust Fund resources are fully spent on that system's navigation projects.

Please vote for the Full Utilization of the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund legislation.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM D. FRIEDMAN,
President & Chief Executive Officer.

EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR FLORIDA'S SEASONAL GROWERS

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

Mr. SPANO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to raise awareness about an issue that is important to our Nation and essential to my district. Strawberry growers in Plant City, Florida, are under attack.

For years Mexico has spent millions subsidizing their strawberry production. This has allowed them to export strawberries at a cost our local growers cannot compete with. Consequently, imports of Mexican strawberries have increased by approximately 80 percent since 2010. Furthermore, current trade agreements don't allow seasonal growers to bring antidumping claims. This means our growers are left with a right against unlawful dumping but no means of enforcing it.

Plant City, Florida, is known as the Winter Strawberry Capital of the World and produces more than 85 percent of all the winter strawberries grown here in our Nation. It is imperative for Congress to correct the situation and pass legislation that gives our growers the protections that they need and deserve.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO THE HONORABLE JOHN CONYERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2019, the gentlewoman from Michigan (Mrs. LAWRENCE) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. LAWRENCE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on the subject of my Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Michigan?

There was no objection.

Mrs. LAWRENCE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Congressman John Conyers. He was one of the 13 founding members of the Congressional Black Caucus. I stand here today joining the chair of the Congressional Black Caucus, KAREN BASS, in recognizing that he served for 53 years in the U.S. House of Representatives, making him one of the longest-serving House Members in history and the first African American to hold the title of dean.

Congressman Conyers was born in Detroit on May 16, 1929, the eldest of four sons of John and Lucille. He attended Detroit public schools and graduated from Northwestern High School. After graduating he served in the National Guard and then joined the U.S. Army.

He was inspired by his friend, Dr. Martin Luther King, to run for office and was elected to the House of Representatives in 1964. His first hire was civil rights hero, Rosa Parks.

As a human rights and civil rights champion, Mr. Conyers opposed the death penalty and fought police brutality. He also co-led and was a cosponsor for the Voting Rights Act of 1965. Mr. Conyers also assisted in passing the Help America Vote Act, the Violence Against Women Act, the motor vehicle bill, the National Jazz Preservation, Education and Promulgation Act, and the Martin Luther King Federal Holiday Commission Extension Act.

Today I am joined by a number of my colleagues who will be giving remarks.

Mr. Speaker, it is with honor that I yield to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PAYNE). My colleague and my colleague's father both served with John Conyers.

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, let me first thank the gentlewoman from Detroit for her leadership on this issue tonight. We felt it was only fitting that she lead us in this Special Order hour for Mr. Conyers.

I rise to honor the former Congressman, John James Conyers, after his passing on October 27, 2019. I would like to start by offering my thoughts and prayers to his wife, Monica, and his sons, John and Carl, during this time of loss.

Mr. Conyers spent 53 years as a Congressman from Michigan, mostly from districts in and around the Detroit area. Mr. Conyers was the third longest-serving Congressman and the longest-serving African American Congressman in United States history.

He helped found the Congressional Black Caucus with some of our Nation's most prominent civil rights leaders and colleagues such as Shirley Chisholm and William Lacy Clay, Sr., the father of my esteemed colleague, WILLIAM LACY CLAY, Jr., from Missouri's First District.

During his life he had several accomplishments in and out of Congress. He

joined voter registration drives in Selma, Alabama, in 1963, a year before the landmark 1964 Civil Rights Act even became law. As a Congressman, he led the drive to help make Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday a national holiday and succeeded through perseverance and continued efforts to make that happen despite insurmountable odds. He helped calm revolters in his district during Detroit's racial strife of 1967. He was a vocal opponent of apartheid in South Africa, a political system of legal racial discrimination that he just—as many of us in this great Nation—would not tolerate. He fought for restrictions on gun ownership to prevent violence, because he knew what it meant in so many of our communities to have these lax laws.

At one point Mr. Conyers was called the leading Black voice in Congress. He was also known as one of the best dressers on Capitol Hill and a lover of jazz. He even got the Congress to declare jazz a national American treasure in 1987.

He was a dedicated public servant, an honored Korean war veteran, a champion of racial equality, and a strong figure in this House for half a century. His legacy will be remembered long after his passing. The work that he has done on this floor and in these Halls is second to none. He cared about this Nation, he cared about his colleagues, and he cared about his constituents in his district.

We will miss him dearly. Mr. Conyers was one of a kind. We are saddened by his loss, so we are here to honor him in the manner in which he should be as an esteemed former Member of this House.

Mrs. LAWRENCE. Mr. Speaker, there are so many facts that we need to share about John Conyers, including the fact that in his 52 years in office he represented Michigan's First Congressional District, Michigan's 14th Congressional District, and Michigan's 13th Congressional District. Also during his time in Congress he chaired the House Oversight and Reform Committee and also the House Judiciary Committee and served as dean of the House.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LEWIS) who is my amazing colleague and who will have comments about the passing and honoring of our colleague whom we all are mourning, John Conyers, who impacted so many of us in this country.

Mr. LEWIS. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the young lady from Michigan—Mrs. LAWRENCE. I love that.

Mr. LEWIS. Well, you are still very young—for bringing us together to honor John Conyers.

The former dean of the House of Representatives and the cofounder of the Congressional Black Caucus, John Conyers, was born at a time when we needed someone to stand up and to speak up and speak out and to get in the way of getting what I call good trouble, necessary trouble.

As a matter of fact, John Conyers and Martin Luther King, Jr. were born