H.R. 860. THE SURFACE TRANSPORTATION RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT ACT OF 1997

HON. CONSTANCE A. MORELLA

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 27, 1997

Mrs. MORELLA. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing the Surface Transportation Research and Development Act of 1997 with Congressman GEORGE BROWN, the ranking member of the Science Committee. The legislation authorizes appropriations to the Department of Transportation to carryout surface transportation research and development programs for the next 6 years.

During the 102nd Congress, the Science Committee worked in a bipartisan fashion to lay the ground-work for most current surface transportation research, development, and technology transfer programs by drafting the research section of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991, commonly referred to as ISTEA. Today, the legislation that I am introducing will serve simply as a starting point as we begin the reauthorization process for these important programs.

To accommodate our future transportation infrastructure needs and minimize congestion, we need to continue the research and development work that was authorized in 1991 by the Science Committee through ISTEA. These programs seek to develop and deploy new technologies and innovative solutions that improve our current infrastructure's performance and capacity. Research and development is our best chance to address our burgeoning transportation needs in a cost effective and environmentally responsible manner.

INTRODUCTION OF FOUR BILLS TO IMPROVE FEDERAL CONTRACTING PRACTICES

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 27, 1997

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, in a season that will be dominated by deficit reduction, all Federal spending must be scrutinized and made accountable. Today I am introducing four bills to bring accountability for the first time to the shadow government. While the Federal agency work force is being cut each year, we are continuing to support a growing and largely unmonitored private contract service sector and work force from which the Federal Government procures services. The huge $114 billion service contracting portion of the Federal budget has avoided reductions while deficit reduction has spared few others. Members who favor contracting out and privatization and those who prefer that the work be done by Federal agencies can all agree that both must be held accountable, because both are funded by taxpayer dollars.

Service contracting constitutes the fastest growing area of Federal procurement, accounting for over $114 billion of the $200 billion spent each year on outside contracts. In only 3 years, between fiscal year 1989 and fiscal year 1992, the number of contractors doing business with the Government rose from 62,819 to 82,472.

Just a few years ago, the OMB itself indicated that contracting is out of control. Yet this large Federal expenditure has remained hidden in the shadows, unlike Federal agencies and employees. There is no way to know whether this sector has contributed a single dollar to deficit reduction. It is remarkable that despite a governmentwide effort to promote efficiency, we have not considered the inefficiency of guaranteeing contractors an invulnerable chunk of tax dollars.

The Clinton administration, to its credit, has worked hard to make service contractors more responsive—for example, by proposing new performance-based standards for existing service contracts. However, the budget that Congress is now considering proposes no cuts in funds allocated specifically to service contracts—thus leaving untouched a huge source of potential savings—while demanding continuing sacrifices from the career work force that makes up the visible government.

The time is long past due for overhauling the contracting practices of the Federal Government. With the four bills I am introducing today, I hope to help begin the process of reinventing Federal contracting just as the rest of the Federal Government is being re-invented.

FULL FEDERAL PAY RAISE

My first bill would cut $5.7 billion in Federal agency funds for service contracts and make this money available for pay raises that are due Federal employees in 1998. Federal employees are again being required to give up part of their statutory pay increases while contract employees paid from the same Federal budget again remain untouched. The intent of this bill is to eliminate the discrimination that allows the Government to extract sacrifices from civil servants without considering ways to seek some savings from contractors. The process of competitive bidding does not insure savings and efficiency, but only that the Government may get the best deal among those who are competing. The 5 percent cut would compel contractors to scrutinize themselves for efficiency in the same way as we are now requiring of Federal agencies. Especially when compared with the sizable reductions agencies have experienced, this cut is so small that it should be beyond debate.

BUYOUT REFORM

My second bill would plug a hole in the buyout legislation reauthorized last year. When enacting the initial legislation in 1994, Congress went to extraordinary lengths to ensure that civil servants who were bought out with cash, could not be replaced with new hires and that the resulting 272,900 planned reductions in the Federal work force would be permanent. However, as it stands now, the buyout law would allow untold numbers of contract employees to replace bought-out Federal employees. Congress did not intend for buyouts to result in a simple substitution of contract employees for career employees. Rather, Congress made the judgment that the Government should be smaller and that considerable saving should result. The anticipated savings will not be made if one set of FTE's—Full-time equivalent employees—are substituted for another.

COST COMPARISONS

The reason most often advanced for contracting out work is that it is cheaper. However, a 1994 GAO study contradicts this assumption, and a 1994 OMB study revealed that cost-savings comparisons often are not always done. Federal agencies routinely do not compare the cost of contracting with the cost of doing work in-house. Thus, my third bill would require agencies to make these cost comparisons and would prohibit them from entering into an outside service contract if the services could be performed at a lower cost by agency employees.

Beyond the discrimination against career employees who are denied work regardless of efficiency and costs, current contracting practices are fundamentally bad business. According to the GAO report, issuing service contracts and hiring consultants can very often actually cost Federal agencies more than using Federal employees. In several of the cases analyzed by GAO, agencies could have saved more than 50 percent by keeping the work in-house.

SIZE OF CONTRACTING WORK FORCE

The absence of basic information, beginning with the size of the contracting work force, makes it impossible to make intelligent decisions about contracting out. To its credit, Congress in 1988 passed legislation requiring agencies to significantly cut service contracts. However, a subsequent GAO report found that there was no way to know if the agencies had actually complied with the legislation. Therefore, my fourth bill requires the OMB to develop a governmentwide system for determining and reporting the number of non-Federal employees engaged in service contracts.

All four of these bills would provide more systematic ways for monitoring and constraining the expenses associated with contracting out of services—just as we have insisted for Federal agencies and employees. Efficiency and deficit reduction must not stop at the door of the Federal agency. We need to bring the shadow government into the full light of day so that the sacrifices demanded in the name of re-inventing government may be shared by all employees and by every area of Government.

REGIONAL COOPERATION ACT

HON. JAMES A. TRAFICANT, JR.

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 27, 1997

Mr. TRAFICANT. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing the Regional Cooperation Act [RCA], a significant first step in the effort to discourage fractionalization and encourage cooperation among America's communities. I urge my colleagues to cosponsor this important measure.

The Federal Government has always been a powerful force in funding economic development opportunities. From the voyages of Christopher Columbus to the establishment of the New York and Virginia colonies, nations have invested in the efforts of their people in order to build stronger national economies.

Unfortunately, while Federal support is an important undertaking in general, it has in many circumstances led to infighting and fractionalization. In the quest for limited Federal resources, communities have battled their neighbors and, as a result, undercut their regional economies. Dr. Gil Peterson, an expert in urban studies at Youngstown State University, noted: ''All too often, political decisions

are made to reward as many political entities as possible, and the level of investment is spread too thin to be effective.''

The National Association of Public Administrators [NAPA] agrees. In its publication ''A Path to Smarter Economic Development: Reassessing the Federal Role'', NAPA asserts that government agencies ''tend to perpetuate a focus on small political and geographic units rather than regions.''

The RCA is an important first step in changing the Federal Government's divisive approach to funding economic development activities. The RCA encourages regional cooperation by amending the criteria used by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development [HUD] to award Economic Development Initiative [EDI] grants. The new criterion will simply read: ''When applicable as determined by the Secretary, the extent of regional cooperation demonstrated by the proposed plan.'' Note that my measure in no way mandates regional cooperation. Rather, if such cooperation is appropriate, applicants will benefit if their proposals reflect a sense of cooperation with their neighboring communities.

EDI's potency as a tool for enhancing and expanding economic activity make it an appropriate starting point for encouraging regional cooperation. Since its inception, over $400 million in EDI grants have funded the revitalization efforts of over 100 communities. Further, EDI funds are competitively awarded, are limited to a percentage of the section 108 and must work in tandem with the loan guarantee. As such, the amount of an EDI award is controlled, yet no formula has been uprooted to implement my measure.

The Tri-County Mini-Loan Fund, Inc., a revolving loan fund for small business ventures in my congressional district, is a nationally renowned program that boasts strong regional cooperation. Since its inception in 1992, the Mini-Loan Fund has pumped nearly $2 million into the regional economy with few defaults.

In establishing the Mini-Loan Fund, we observed the impact of fractionalized efforts and took a different path. We worked with banks, local universities, and non-profit organizations from all over Ohio's Mahoning Valley to ensure the entire market would benefit from the fund, not just those within specified political boundaries. In applying for EDI and section 108 funding to enhance the program, three counties and three cities submitted six separate applications and bundled them together to form a singular, powerful application.

As a results, HUD not only awarded our Mini-Loan Fund nearly $8 million in grants and loan guarantees, but then-Assistant Secretary Andrew Cuomo declared it a ''national model of regional economic development.'' The now-Secretary Cuomo went on to thank the commissioners and mayors of the respective counties and cities for ''pooling your resources to grow jobs for the region.''

Mr. Speaker, the Federal Government is and will continue to be a key in successful local community development activities. It just needs to play its role a little smarter. Instead of playing communities off one another, it needs to bring them together. As we witnessed in my district, such cooperation can be a powerful tool for revitalizing not only a community, not an entire region.

Again, I urge my colleagues to cosponsor the Regional Cooperation Act.

INTRODUCTION OF THE MARIAN ANDERSON CENTENNIAL COMMEMORATIVE COIN ACT

HON. GEORGE E. BROWN, JR.

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 27, 1997

Mr. BROWN of California. Mr. Speaker, 100 years ago, on February 27, 1897, Marian Anderson, one of the world's greatest singers, a champion for civil rights, and a leader in the advancement of global peace, was born to a poor family in Philadelphia. PA. She died at the age of 96 on April 8, 1993. To honor the centennial of the birth of this great individual during Black History Month, I am today introducing with my 13 other colleagues, the Marian Anderson Centennial Commemorative Coin Act.

This legislation is a bipartisan effort to honor Ms. Anderson's life of achievements and accomplishments. Marian Anderson, a master of repertoire across operatic, recital, and American traditional genres, played a vital role in the acceptance of African-American musicians in the classical music world. In 1939, the Daughters of the American Revolution [DAR] refused to allow Anderson to sing at Constitution Hall because of her race. As a result of the ensuing public outcry, Eleanor Roosevelt resigned from the DAR and helped arrange a concert at the Lincoln Memorial that drew an audience of 75,000—an audience far larger than Constitution Hall could ever accommodate.

Marian Anderson was awarded 24 honorary degrees by institutions of higher learning. In 1963, she was given a Presidential Medal of Freedom. Congress passed a resolution in 1974 to have a special gold medal minted in her name. Marian Anderson was also an alternate delegate to the United Nations where she received the U.N. Peace Prize in 1977. In addition, she was awarded the National Arts Medal in 1986.

The surcharges from the sale of coins will be distributed to the Smithsonian Institution and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting for the endowment of exhibits and educational programs related to African-American art, history, and culture, as well as on the life of Marian Anderson. In addition, this bill assures that minting and issuing coins will not result in any net cost to the U.S. Government.

As we celebrate the centennial of the birth of this great individual during Black History Month, I urge my colleagues in joining us to support the passage of the Marian Anderson Centennial Commemorative Coin Act.

THE LATE REVEREND RALPH DAVID ABERNATHY, JR.

HON. JOHN LEWIS

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 27, 1997

Mr. LEWIS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I am once again pleased and honored to introduce legislation honoring the Reverend Ralph David Abernathy, Jr., leader of the National Poor People's Campaign of 1968. My legislation would authorize the construction of a memorial on the National Mall in honor of the Reverend Abernathy and the thousands of individuals who participated in the Poor People's Campaign.

During the 1960's, I was honored to be a part of the civil rights movement—a movement that changed the face of our Nation. People from throughout our Nation—old and young, black and white, rich and poor—joined the nonviolent revolution that made our country a better, fairer, more just Nation. During this time, I was fortunate to get to know Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and his partner in the movement—Dr. Abernathy.

Dr. Abernathy was an inspiring and committed leader from the earliest days of the movement. When Rosa Parks was arrested for refusing to stand in the back of the bus while there were empty seats in the white section of the bus, she inspired the Montgomery bus boycott. As ministers of the two leading black churches in Montgomery, AL, Dr. King and Dr. Abernathy worked together to organize and sustain that boycott. Thus began the strong bonds of friendship and commitment that would last as long as the two men lived.

Dr. Abernathy had a lifelong commitment to securing and protecting basic civil rights for all Americans. I marched with him many times throughout the South, including Selma and Montgomery. After the assassination of Dr. King in 1968, Dr. Abernathy assumed leadership of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, and worked to carry on the dream of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. After Dr. King's death, Dr. Abernathy continued to organize and lead marches and other events, including the Poor People's Campaign, a massive demonstration to protest rising unemployment, held in Washington, DC.

The Reverend Abernathy passed away 7 years ago. Today, I am introducing a resolution authorizing the construction of a memorial to the Reverend Abernathy and the Poor People's Campaign on the National Mall. I invite my colleagues to join me in supporting this effort. The monument will celebrate the achievements of the past, commemorate those who marched alongside us many years ago, and pay special tribute to the sacrifices and the contributions of Dr. Abernathy and others who participated in the Poor People's Campaign. Thousands of people participated. Some had small roles, others large roles. The Reverend Ralph David Abernathy had many roles, often at the same time. He was a teacher, a leader, an organizer, a soldier, and a friend. Many were inspired by his spirit, his good humor, and his guidance. Today, I invite my colleagues to join me in celebrating his legacy and his life.

IN HONOR OF MORTIMER LEVITT ON HIS 90TH BIRTHDAY

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 27, 1997

Mrs. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure and esteemed respect that I acknowledge my constituent, Mortimer Levitt, for his many achievements.

Mr. Levitt, founder of the Custom Shop Shirtmakers, started his venture in 1937. After losing his job and his savings in the height of the Great Depression, Mr. Levitt courageously