

You decide to call your mother after dinner and find out how she might be doing. You pay a utility tax when you use the phone.

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Finally it is your time. It is time to relax, sit down. So you kick up, turn on Sportscenter to see how your favorite team might be doing.

In our case in South Dakota it happens to be the Minnesota Twins. Mr. Speaker, they are in last place. If that were not bad enough, you had to pay a cable tax to find out that information.

Finally, the day ends back where it began, as you lay down on your bed, close your eyes and go to sleep. And guess what? Just on the chance that you do not wake up before the morning you get hit one last time by the government; yes, with the death tax.

Now this is sort of a humorous way of looking at this issue, but there is a very serious message here, and that is the tax burden on the average American has grown every year, and Tax Freedom Day now falls 11 days later than it did back in 1993. In South Dakota we do a little bit better. Our Tax Freedom Day comes on May 2, which is about a week earlier than the Nation Tax Freedom Day, but it still is not right to spend more than 4 months of every year working for someone other than yourself.

South Dakotans know how to spend their money, they know what their family and their community needs, and they ought to be allowed to keep more of the income that they earn to spend it on the things that they need most. Maybe that is the children's education, maybe it is to make a down payment on a house, a farm or a ranch, or maybe it is time to trade in the old car and get a new one. Maybe it is time to invest in a favorite charity or perhaps church, and maybe it is time for you or your spouse just to cut down on some of the hours or quit working altogether and spend more time at home with the children.

The point is, Mr. Speaker, that it is the American people's money, and they should be spending it according to what is in their best interests.

We cut taxes in 1997 for the first time since 1981. We need to do it again. People of this country work hard, they need to keep more of what they earn, and every time they send money to Washington they are giving up power and control. Mr. Speaker, we want to see that the power and control stays at home with the American family, with the individual and with the community.

Mr. Speaker, I hope that we can work in a very deliberate way to bring about additional tax relief for hard-working Americans.

LIVABILITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. REYNOLDS). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. HOLT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, since World War II, the American dream has been a house in the suburbs. But in many places in our country, that dream is turning into a nightmare—traffic, air pollution, lost farms and parks and higher taxes.

Suburban sprawl is one of the fastest growing threats to America's environment as prime farmland is replaced with malls, parking lots and housing developments.

Unplanned suburban growth means increased traffic jams, costlier public services, wasted tax revenue and increased pollution.

Most importantly, it means a deteriorating quality of life for ourselves and our neighbors.

How do we explain to our children that their neighborhood wasn't always housing developments and shopping malls? And how many hours with family have been lost in traffic? How far do we have to drive to see and enjoy open, naturally preserved acres?

We need to change the way cities think about growth and plan their development.

It is for those reasons that I support the Transportation and Community and System Preservation Pilot program, otherwise known as TCSP. The TCSP program was created by the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century. It is an initiative consisting of research and grants that to communities as they work to solve interrelated problems involving transportation, land development, environmental protection, public safety, and economic development.

Of the 35 projects selected from an initial pool of 524 applications, two grants were awarded to New Jersey. One project in Northern New Jersey will prepare modern intermodal freight infrastructure to support brownfield economic redevelopment. The completed plan will address needed transportation access to brownfield sites and effectively market the sites for freight related activities. In addition, it will provide new employment opportunities for residents, reduce the volume of trucks on regional roads, and safeguard the environment.

The second project, Transit-friendly Communities for New Jersey, will work with diverse community partners to develop specific ways that New Jersey towns can become more "transit friendly." By building on both New Jersey Transit's initiatives to make train stations themselves "passenger friendly" and on statewide "smart growth" initiatives to reduce sprawl, we can encourage new development within walking distance of transit stations. It also allows New Jersey Transit leverage the resources of its non-profit and government partners to shape the future of communities around transit stations well into the future.

The results will be models for other New Jersey communities to follow in future projects. In addition, the project will ensure that communities understand how transportation investments can enhance the environment, create strong downtown centers, and improve quality of life. Moreover, New Jersey Transit is committed to using the process developed under this program as a way to change innovative efforts from "pilot projects" to "the way we always do business." With its diversity of station types and communities, this program will be a model for the nation.

By funding innovative activities at the neighborhood, local, metropolitan, state, and regional level, the TCSP program will increase our knowledge of the costs and benefits of different approaches to integrating transportation

investments with community preservation efforts, land development patterns, and environmental protection.

These strategies will help New Jersey grow according to their best values by: improving the efficiency of the transportation system; reducing environmental impacts of transportation; reducing the need for costly future public infrastructure investments; ensuring efficient access to jobs, services, and centers of trade; and examining private sector developmental patterns and investments that support these goals.

The reason for this initiative is clear.

Across America, we are discovering that livable communities—places with a high quality of life—are more economically competitive communities.

The way we build and develop determines whether economic growth comes at the expense of community and family life, or enhances it.

By helping communities pursue smart growth through initiatives such as the TCSP program, we can build a better America for our children.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. DAVIS of Illinois addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

CLEVELAND AREA PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS THAT DEAL WITH MAKING OUR COMMUNITIES LIVEABLE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Ohio (Mrs. JONES) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. JONES of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join my colleagues in speaking in support of livable community initiatives.

I represent Ohio's 11th Congressional District that consists of both urban and suburban areas. Creating areas all citizens can enjoy is important. I believe we must not sacrifice our environment for expansion or destroy that which is already in place when we can utilize our spaces better.

I would like to discuss several programs and projects in my district that deal with making our communities livable:

The first program is in a small suburb of Cleveland called Woodmere Village. Woodmere is a small, predominantly African American community. Today the main thoroughfare in the village is Chagrin Boulevard, a busy two-lane road. Chagrin Boulevard, or Kinsman Road, as it was originally known, has long been a center for commerce with restaurants and stores, places like Gino's Jewelry and Trophy and Tuscany Gourmet Foods are examples of businesses that draw people from all over the greater Cleveland area.

It is really wonderful for the Cleveland area to have such a vital route in