Americans benefit from the expertise and hard work of engineers everyday, but rarely acknowledge or recognize our debt to them. I am lucky enough, however, to have a different experience with engineers. During my time on the Science Committee and especially as Chairman, I have come to rely on ASCE as a valuable resource. I may not be making headlines here, but we in government do not know everything all the time.

After the tragedy of September 11, we immediately began to look for lessons we could learn from this horrible event. FEMA put together a team, led by ASCE, to investigate the World Trade Center collapse. The team set out to discover exactly why the building collapsed, if the buildings could have stood for longer, and if more lives could have been saved. I cannot even begin to fathom the work this team did, but in eight months they delivered an important report to Congress detailing the sequence of events that led to the buildings' collapse. This work will go a long way toward saving lives. Now, we are working closely with ASCE with legislation that will hopefully make their jobs, on further building investigations, easier.

Mr. Speaker, I am very proud of the work that civil engineers do for our country and I am ever grateful for the service that ASCE provides to this Congress and to me personally. I congratulate ASCE on 150 years and I look forward to many more.

Mr. BARTON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BARTON) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 387.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the concurrent resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

HIGHWAY FUNDING RESTORATION ACT

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3694) to provide for highway infrastructure investment at the guaranteed funding level contained in the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 3694

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Highway Funding Restoration Act''.

SEC. 2. FEDERAL-AID HIGHWAY PROGRAM OBLIGATION CEILING.

Section 1102 of the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (23 U.S.C. 104 note; 112 Stat. 115, 113 Stat. 1753) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(k) RESTORATION OF OBLIGATION LIMITATION FOR FISCAL YEAR 2003.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, for fiscal year 2003, the obligations for Federal-aid highway and highway safety construction programs that are subject to the obligation limitation set forth in subsection (a)(6)—

''(1) shall be not less than $27,746,000,000; and

''(2) shall be distributed in accordance with this section.''.

SEC. 3. RESTORATION OF OBLIGATION CEILING.

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the adjustment made pursuant to section 1102(h) of the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century for fiscal year 2003 shall be deemed to be zero.

SEC. 4. ADJUSTMENTS TO GUARANTEE FUNDING LEVELS.

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, all adjustments made pursuant to section 251(b)(1)(B) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 to the highway category and to section 8103(a)(5) of the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century for fiscal year 2003 shall be deemed to be zero. This section shall apply immediately to all reports issued pursuant to section 254 of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 for fiscal year 2003, including the discretionary sequestration preview report.

SEC. 5. SENSE OF CONGRESS REGARDING REVENUE ALIGNED BUDGET AUTHORITY.

It is the sense of Congress that the revenue aligned budget authority provision in section 251(b)(1)(B) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 should be amended in the future to more accurately align highway spending with highway revenues while maintaining predictability and stability in highway funding levels.

SEC. 6. AUTHORIZATION FOR HIGHWAY PROJECTS.

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, projects and activities designated on pages 82 through 92 of House Report 107–308 shall be eligible for fiscal year 2002 funds made available for the program for which each project or activity is so designated.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Alaska (Mr. YOUNG) and the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. OBERSTAR) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Alaska (Mr. YOUNG).

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

(Mr. YOUNG of Alaska asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 3694, the Highway Funding Restoration Act. This bipartisan bill has 316 cosponsors in the House of Representatives and the other body companion measure, S. 1917, is cosponsored by 74 Members of that body.

I want to particularly thank the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. NUSSLE), the chairman of the Committee on the Budget, for his support for the restoration of highway funding. The gentleman from Iowa (Mr. NUSSLE) included in the House budget resolution a provision for the outlay of these funds. I support enforcement of the budget resolution adopted by the House.

Mr. Speaker, I am working with the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. NUSSLE) to address in the future a better method of calculating the Revenue Aligned Budget Authority, which we refer to as RABA. We need to more accurately align highway spending with highway revenues, while maintaining predictability and stability in highway funding levels.

There is a clear and strong consensus that H.R. 3694 is the right approach to restore proposed cuts to Federal-aid highway funding in the fiscal year 2003 budget.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 3694 restores not less than $4.4 billion to the Federal-aid highway construction programs for fiscal year 2003, and ensures that these funds will be spent according to the formula established by the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century, otherwise called TEA–21.

I am pleased that the leadership of the House has agreed to this expedited process. I am confident that the Senate will also take timely action on the bill before the fiscal year 2003 appropriations cycle is well underway.

Mr. Speaker, this bill is vitally necessary for three reasons. First, State Departments of Transportation cannot absorb the proposed cut of $8.5 billion below the level of funding received in the fiscal year of 2002, a 27 percent program reduction.

Second, transportation spending keeps people employed. More than 180,000 family-wage jobs are associated with the $4.4 billion funding restoration in this bill.

Third, cash balances in the Highway Trust Fund, the dedicated revenue source for highway and transit construction, are sufficient to accommodate this funding restoration.

Again, I want to thank the full committee ranking member, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. OBERSTAR); the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. PETRI), the chairman of the Subcommittee on Highways and Transit; and the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. BORSKI), the subcommittee ranking member, along with the full membership of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, and all of the other 242 Members of the House urging immediate passage of the bill.

Mr. Speaker, again, I cannot stress enough the importance of this bill. It does restore the funding level where it should be to build our highways so that we can keep the 180,000 people employed and, more than that, increase the infrastructure necessities in this country and keep them on the right track.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

□ 1545

Mr. OBERSTAR. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. BORSKI), the ranking member of the Subcommittee on Highways and Transit.

(Mr. BORSKI asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BORSKI. Mr. Speaker, let me first thank the distinguished ranking member of the full committee, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. OBERSTAR), for his hard work in this measure. I also want to commend our chairman, the gentleman from Alaska (Mr.

YOUNG), and our subcommittee chairman, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. PETRI), for this excellent piece of legislation; and I rise in strong support of H.R. 3694, the Highway Funding Restoration Act.

Mr. Speaker, one of the most important measures this House has passed in recent times was TEA 21, and in TEA 21 we were able to increase the amount of spending for our highways by over 40 percent and for transit by over 46 percent. We did that because, A, we worked together. This is the best committee in the whole House in my view for working in a bipartisan manner for the good of this country. We did that by capturing all the gasoline taxes that were sent out by the people of this country to Washington to use for transportation for its intended purpose. We had firewalls erected to protect that spending, and we came up with the revenue aligned budget authority, better known as RABA.

This process is important to make sure and to ensure that all incoming gas tax receipts are applied to transportation infrastructure spending, a core principle that members of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure strongly support. Based on RABA calculations for the fiscal year 2003, the President's fiscal year 2003 budget proposes to cut funding for the Federal aid highway program by $8.6 billion or 27 percent. A cut of this magnitude would be absolutely devastating to State and local transportation programs.

The administration claims that TEA 21 required these cuts; and, Mr. Speaker, that simply is not true. TEA 21's guaranteed highway investment level as reflected in the President's budget is a floor, not a ceiling. The administration could have and should have requested more.

The committee bill proposes to increase fiscal year 2003 funding by at least $4.4 billion to $27.7 billion, the level authorized in TEA 21. This bill accomplishes the following: it protects 180,000 family wage construction jobs; promotes economic recovery through the proven infusion of funds and of proven infrastructure programs; and helps compensate for the drastic and disruptive swing in highway funding in fiscal year 2003. Moreover, the additional funds are completely paid for with funds already in the highway trust funds. The fund has an 18 to $20 billion balance that can easily accommodate this and can only be used for highway and transit programs.

In addition, and as important to providing increased funding for fiscal year 2003, the bill provides a higher budget baseline for which to measure next year's reauthorization bill. A higher baseline will improve our ability to increase highway spending in the bill reauthorizing TEA 21.

Mr. Speaker, the committee bill has strong bipartisan support in the House with 317 members co-sponsoring the introduced bill. I urge my colleagues to vote for this bill.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. PETRI), the chairman of the Subcommittee on Highways and Transit of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

Mr. PETRI. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the bill before us, H.R. 3694, the Highway Funding Restoration Act. It is a bipartisan bill as we have heard, and I look forward to its passage this afternoon.

We are moving this bill today as part of an agreement with the leadership in the Committee on Appropriations to ensure proper levels of highway spending under the budget firewalls in the coming year.

The supplemental appropriations bill that will soon be considered by the House will also include language addressing the guaranteed levels of spending as agreed to by the two committees. By declaring the revenue aligned budget authority, which is in the committee known as RABA, calculation for budget year 2003 to be zero, H.R. 3694 restores not less than $4.4 billion for the Federal aid highway program. This is consistent with funding levels that were contemplated when TEA 21 was passed back in 1998, and it ensures that the funding will be spent according to the rules set forth in the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st century, TEA 21.

With 317 co-sponsors in the House and 74 of the companion bill in the Senate, H.R. 3694 has strong bipartisan support. The administration's 2003 budget proposal cut funding for the highway program by 27 percent. State highway programs cannot absorb a cut of this significance, nor can the economy of our country. The potential employment loss created by a cut of this magnitude could be as high as 180,000 family-wage jobs. As the economy climbs out of this short recession, the loss of this many jobs is unacceptable. And it is important to note that the highway trust fund with a cash balance of $20 billion can sustain this spending.

The trust fund is comprised of dedicated revenues paid by highway users that can only be used for highway and transit projects.

Finally, as part of the agreement between the two committees, we have agreed to include technical changes requested by the Committee on Appropriations regarding project funding. Certain projects from the budget year 2002 Transportation Appropriations Act have been found by the Department of Transportation to be ineligible for funding under Federal aid highway guidelines.

As Members may know, I was one who was very concerned by the actions of the Committee on Appropriations last year and trusts that we will not see a repeat this year. But in the spirit of the agreement and securing the additional needed funds, a provision making those projects eligible is included here today.

Mr. Speaker, restoring the highway funds under the firewall is supported by our Nation's governors, our mayors, industry and labor interests alike. I join with our chairman, the gentleman from Alaska (Mr. YOUNG), full committee ranking member, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. OBERSTAR), the Subcommittee on Highways and Transit committee ranking member, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. BORSKI), and the more than 300 co-sponsors and supporting H.R. 3694, and I urge its immediate passage.

Mr. OBERSTAR. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the distinguished gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON).

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I thank the distinguished ranking member for yielding me time. I thank the gentleman and the gentleman from Alaska (Mr. YOUNG), as well as our subcommittee chair and ranking members, for working so well and so closely together to bring this bill to the floor today.

One thing we have enough money for in this time of war-time priorities, this time of recession is to continue to builds our roads and bridges. Thank goodness for the trust fund. Have trust in the trust fund. It would be absurd to let the technicality of a flawed formula keep us from doing what we always do in times of recession: we build and we make jobs.

We are told, of course, that we are coming out of a recession. Well, I want someone to tell that to the 8.6 million Americans who are jobless. I want you to look at our unemployment rates: February, 5.5 percent; March, 5.7 percent; April, 6 percent. Surely Congress can do more with rising unemployment than make it worse.

We have heard about stimulus all last year. This is the stimulus bill. That is what this bill is, and it would destimulate the economy if we were to pull it. Remember, we are not restoring what we had hoped to achieve, but only what we guaranteed to achieve.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD the job loss by State if there were an $8.6 billion cut in the Highway trust fund, Mr. Speaker.

TABLE 2.—FY 2003 FEDERAL HIGHWAY FUNDS AND EMPLOYMENT LOSS RESULTING FROM $8.6 BILLION HIGHWAY INVESTMENT CUT [1]

State	FY 2002 highway program funds [2]	Est. FY 2003 program funds [2]	FY 2003 highway funds lost [2]	Employment loss [3]
Alabama	$561,369,840	$421,025,208	−$140,344,632	−5,894
Alaska	314,796,052	246,539,742	−68,256,310	−2,867

TABLE 2.—FY 2003 FEDERAL HIGHWAY FUNDS AND EMPLOYMENT LOSS RESULTING FROM $8.6 BILLION HIGHWAY INVESTMENT CUT [1]—Continued

State	FY 2002 highway program funds [2]	Est. FY 2003 program funds [2]	FY 2003 highway funds lost [2]	Employment loss [3]
Arizona	486,224,631	365,140,719	−121,083,912	−5,086
Arkansas	362,652,003	275,455,607	−87,196,396	−3,662
California	2,517,465,102	1,899,291,678	−18,173,424	−25,963
Colorado	353,164,878	265,780,999	−87,383,879	−3,670
Connecticut	408,920,297	313,495,052	−95,425,245	−4,008
Delaware	119,922,416	91,097,545	−28,824,871	−1,211
Dist. of Col.	110,273,846	81,398,200	−28,875,646	−1,213
Florida	1,289,548,451	974,165,577	−315,382,874	−13,246
Georgia	988,693,630	745,903,153	−242,790,477	−10,197
Hawaii	142,271,252	106,770,543	−35,500,709	−1,491
Idaho	211,278,292	160,135,462	−51,142,830	−2,148
Illinois	933,065,783	697,096,259	−235,969,524	−9,911
Indiana	638,900,893	486,743,971	−152,156,922	−6,391
Iowa	329,542,978	247,574,819	−81,968,159	−3,443
Kansas	324,857,477	241,313,125	−83,544,352	−3,509
Kentucky	483,920,664	362,099,979	−121,820,685	−5,116
Louisiana	433,579,090	330,471,089	−103,108,001	−4,331
Maine	147,088,238	109,890,629	−37,197,609	−1,562
Maryland	446,350,792	339,318,294	−107,032,498	−4,495
Massachusetts	514,207,475	387,835,987	−126,371,488	−5,308
Michigan	894,938,840	673,029,684	−221,909,156	−9,320
Minnesota	408,448,438	309,125,401	−99,323,037	−4,172
Mississippi	355,307,069	268,482,622	−86,824,447	−3,647
Missouri	646,930,635	488,228,184	−158,702,451	−6,666
Montana	266,187,164	204,791,716	−61,395,448	−2,579
Nebraska	216,342,091	159,818,713	−56,523,378	−2,374
Nevada	199,134,908	149,455,313	−49,679,595	−2,087
New Hampshire	140,217,067	107,247,956	−32,969,111	−1,385
New Jersey	724,639,854	541,582,536	−183,057,318	−7,688
New Mexico	268,593,028	203,825,094	−64,767,934	−2,720
New York	1,410,507,671	1,064,982,917	−345,524,754	−14,512
North Carolina	776,521,747	584,307,329	−192,214,418	−8,073
North Dakota	179,364,937	134,932,708	−44,432,229	−1,866
Ohio	959,669,321	725,512,146	−234,157,175	−9,835
Oklahoma	428,337,012	318,248,522	−110,088,490	−4,624
Oregon	337,801,111	255,489,120	−82,311,991	−3,457
Pennsylvania	1,391,790,146	1,045,698,054	−346,092,092	−14,536
Rhode Island	164,112,784	123,469,448	−40,643,336	−1,707
South Carolina	461,162,748	350,138,781	−111,023,967	−4,663
South Dakota	198,817,128	150,819,598	−47,997,530	−2,016
Tennessee	624,496,977	476,815,649	−147,681,328	−6,203
Texas	2,146,259,084	1,614,117,018	−532,143,066	−22,350
Utah	216,504,854	161,358,980	−55,145,874	−2,316
Vermont	124,155,175	94,175,207	−29,979,968	−1,259
Virginia	710,248,118	544,143,511	−166,104,607	−6,976
Washington	493,771,495	368,381,629	−125,389,866	−5,266
West Virginia	308,059,534	234,857,433	−73,202,101	−3,074
Wisconsin	545,548,760	410,919,572	−134,629,188	−5,654
Wyoming	188,997,682	143,820,077	−45,177,605	−1,897
State Total	27,904,959,458	21,056,318,555	−6,848,640,903	−287,643
Allocated programs	3,894,144,542	2,148,468,445	−1,745,676,097	−73,318
Grand Total	31,799,104,000	23,204,787,000	−8,594,317,000	−360,961

[1] Includes $80 million reduction due to proposed transfer to Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration.
[2] Source: FHWA 2/4/02 Comparison of Estimated FY 2003 Distribution of Obligation Limitation and . . . President's Budget.
[3] Employment loss is spread of 7 years, with most loss occurring in 2003 and 2004.
Current Balance in Highway Account of the Highway Trust Fund: $18,855,632,135.

Mr. Speaker, I indicate that we are not putting the whole thing back. It is 4.4 billion because that is all they had a right to expect. They did not have the right to expect that we would exceed it. They had a right to expect what we guaranteed them when we passed TEA 21. But if we did what the administration wanted, it would be a grand total of 360,961 jobs lost. Nobody wants to do that in this Congress.

Interrupting highway construction would have a particularly chaotic effect on States which are having to cut every other program. They now have to cannibalize some highway projects in order to finish others. It would exacerbate the budget cutting already going on in every State of the Union; and, worse, it would reduce the baseline next year when we reauthorize the surface transportation bill. In other words, we would hurt the past because we are trying to catch up. We would hurt the present and we would hurt the future.

We are getting somewhere in infrastructure. I can remember just a few years ago we were sliding back so badly that we wondered if we would ever catch up. We are catching up. This is no time to turn around and go down the road to deeper unemployment and to infrastructure damage. Thanks for all involved to help us keep moving ahead.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to address one thing that has been brought up by the previous speakers. I do believe this is, in fact, a stimulus package. It is not as large as we would like to have it. There has also been mention, though, about the President's budget cut, and I will have to say that is true; but I also say I have been under seven Presidents since I have been in this body, probably one more than my good friend, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. OBERSTAR).

Under our Constitution the President, regardless of what party, has the responsibility to submit a budget. And as I tell every constituent that comes into our office, that is his responsibility. But it is our responsibility as a House of the people to write the budget. We write the budget. We raise the money for it from the people, and we designate how it shall be spent. That is our role. I am extremely pleased that 317 Members of this Congress decided in this case that it was more important to, in fact, restore the guaranteed money for the construction of highways and bridges and improving our highway system than we were to take the recommendation of another branch of this great government of ours. But I never hold it against any one of the Presidents for that responsibility of submitting the budget.

It makes us do our work a little bit more efficiently and a little bit better. As I mentioned in my opening statement, a whole lot of other people, including the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. NUSSLE), has recognized the importance of the construction of a highway system within this great Nation of ours. We have just begun. We have rail to improve. We have, again, air to improve. We have shipping ports to improve. And the responsibility of the committee, which is totally bipartisan, the responsibility of that committee is to make sure that the people of America recognize the importance of a modern transportation system being put in place for the future. And I would just like to say this is one tiny infant step in the right direction.

We must continue that as we reauthorize TEA 21, as we go forth with new rail legislation, as we go forth with other legislation packages and that we will do.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. OBERSTAR. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 15 seconds to say I concur with my distinguished chairman.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentlewoman from California (Mrs. TAUSCHER).

Mrs. TAUSCHER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the ranking member for yielding me time.

Mr. Speaker, I too rise to support H.R. 3694 and to thank the chairman and the full committee ranking member and the subcommittee chairman and ranking member for their leadership to put forward the Highway Funding Restoration Act.

I am proud to be a co-sponsor of this legislation and am proud of the bipartisan way the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure has worked together to bring this bill to the floor.

This bill will restore $373 million for highway projects in California and allow projects we desperately need to move forward, including adding carpool lanes to I–680/80, widening Highway 4, and developing the Oakland Airport interconnector.

This does not replace all the money President Bush cut from California's transportation budget, but it is a good first step. It also translates to saving more than 15,000 good-paying jobs across our State. Commuters in the Bay Area face some of the worst congestion in the country, and we are also facing a sluggish economy.

Now is not the time to be cutting Federal funding for highway projects. This bill will fund California's section of the highway account at $2.3 billion for the next year. While this amount was authorized in TEA 21 for the next year, it is not sufficient to meet California's needs. I will continue to push for more money to be used from the trust fund which has $18 billion in cash just sitting in it.

In addition to restoring money, this bill reasserts the integrity of the budget firewalls in TEA 21 and the realigned budget authority mechanism called RABA. These provisions will ensure that local communities can plan transportation projects knowing that the Federal Government will be a predictable partner throughout the life of a project.

Every community in America depends on transportation to keep its people and local economy moving. I urge my colleagues to support this bill and keep America's transportation improvements on track.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. OBERSTAR. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, in anticipation of yielding to the next gentleman, I will yield to the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. RAHALL), but I just wanted to point out that the gentleman was the ranking member on the Subcommittee on Highways and Transit in the last Congress when we authorized TEA 21. I want to acknowledge the superb role the gentleman played in the crafting of that legislation and the many hours of personal endeavor he gave to the crafting of what became known as TEA 21, and his solid grasp of the issues that we fought over in this body and in the conference.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. RAHALL).

□ 1600

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. OBERSTAR) and our ranking member on the full Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure for yielding me the time and for his very kind words. I also join in commending the gentleman from Alaska (Mr. YOUNG), the chairman, for his leadership; the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. OBERSTAR), ranking member; the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. BORSKI), the ranking subcommittee member; and the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. PETRI), the ranking subcommittee chairman, for their leadership, not only in bringing this legislation to the floor but for last year's invaluable leadership, the last time we did TEA–21, for their leadership in that regard as well.

Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased that H.R. 3694, the Highway Funding Restoration Act, does have broad bipartisan support. It will restore, as we have heard, at least $4.4 billion to the Federal aid to highway program from the amount the administration had requested. These brutal cuts would have sucked the life out of our highway program in southern West Virginia.

Keeping our new highway construction and existing road improvements on track is our number one need at this moment. This vital work saves lives and brings new jobs, especially in the southern part of West Virginia, as we are once again experiencing the devastating effects of floods that have ravaged through our area in the last couple of weeks.

We have $18 billion sitting in the Highway Trust Fund. If anything, we need to pour more of it into building the roads our people desperately need, not less. Today, we will set a funding level of $21.7 billion for fiscal year 2003. This will help to ensure that each of the 50 States gets the highway funding they need so they will not have to resort to postponing or canceling highway projects.

In West Virginia, we are working on many highway projects to enable our citizens to participate in interstate commerce and to open up West Virginia to new business opportunities, including the Coalfields Expressway, the King Coal Highway and upgrading the safety of Route 10.

The West Virginia DOT cannot afford to lose Federal funds necessary to plan, build and maintain these roads. I know the DOTs in the other 49 States will say the same thing about their highway projects. That is why we have such broad support for this legislation, not only from Members of Congress, but from State governments, highway groups and others around the country.

When we wrote TEA–21, we guaranteed a minimum level of spending in the Federal aid to highway program. H.R. 3694 will ensure that the budgetary firewalls are protected. In addition, this bill restores the obligation limits for fiscal year 2003 so Federal highway spending will not be less than $27.7 billion.

In West Virginia, we have been working to build jobs through transportation. We also have a strong transportation research center at the Rahall Appalachian Transportation Institute at Marshall University in Huntington, West Virginia, which is one of the University Transportation Centers we established in TEA–21.

The bill we will pass today will restore $4.4 billion to the Federal aid highway program. It will protect 180,000 family wage construction jobs. In West Virginia, we will see $45.9 million restored and 3,074 jobs protected.

We have 317 bipartisan cosponsors of this legislation because of the tremendous leadership of Chairman YOUNG and Ranking Member OBERSTAR and because each Member realizes how vital a guaranteed highway funding level is to their respective States in order to secure constituents' jobs in the highway construction industry and to promote a healthy economy.

Again, I ask for enactment of this legislation and commend the leadership on both sides of the House.

Mr. OBERSTAR. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 10 minutes.

The role of a chairman, Mr. Speaker, is to lead and our chairman of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure on this legislation and on many others has led. As soon as we got word of the budget language and the prospective cut, without waiting to see the actual document, the chairman sprang into action. We joined forces, as we do on this committee and as we are known almost legendarily in the House, on a bipartisan basis, to rectify the wrong.

The chairman was quite right in pointing out that, I choose to say, with all the Presidents with whom we have served, not under. We are a coequal branch. This is not new. Cutting highway funds started with President Lyndon Johnson in 1968 on the recommendation of the same gang that did one, the then Bureau of the Budget, that said we need to cut funds in order to dampen inflation, build up a bit of a surplus to offset the burgeoning surplus at the beginning of the Vietnam War, and as the chairman observed, it is an old dictum that the President proposes but the Congress disposes.

As astute and an early observer as Edmund Burke, the noted British historian, political science writer, a century ago observed that a presidential budget in the hands of a strong Speaker is worth little more than the paper on which the words are written. Well, we intend to do what Burke observed,

to assure that those are just simply numbers on paper and that the intent of TEA–21 is carried out.

It will restore $4.4 billion of the President's 27 percent cut in the Federal aid highway program. Important for a number of reasons, as other speakers have noted, this cut itself will, or this restoration will affect 180,000 jobs, but the original budget cut proposed would affect 360,000 jobs over the next 5 years. Worse, it will result in a budget surplus in the Highway Trust Fund of $34 billion and extend it out over a decade. It will reach a nearly $80 billion surplus in the Highway Trust Fund.

By way of comparison when we started with TEA–21 in January of 1998, there was a $29 billion surplus in the Highway Trust Fund. We would be going backward. In fact, if we do not make this restoration the last year of funding for TEA–21 will be less than the first year of TEA–21. That is not the direction in which the American people want this country to move or expect this committee to move in.

We do not establish a ceiling for the highway program. The bill says highway funding should be at least $27.7 billion. That is the minimum, and as the process goes forward, I hope we will be able to restore even more than that as we get into the final process of the budget and the supplemental appropriations bill with the other body.

The Highway Trust Fund now can support $30 billion in outlays. By the end of this process, I hope we will have achieved an outcome that expends every last penny of that Highway Trust Fund. We did not just do this as an accident when we crafted TEA–21. That was a hard fought bill here on this floor till 2:30 in the morning on the budget process in 1997, and then all the way through the committee and into 1998, and we had an overwhelming vote, and then we went to conference and we had a 2-month conference with the United States Senate. Every piece of that legislation was fought through.

The other body did not want to have a guaranteed account. The other body did not want to have the levels of authorization that we set forth in what became TEA–21, and this committee, standing for this body, fought for the guaranteed account and for the revenue adjusted budget authority, and we got it in there. We cannot let a presidential or OMB dictum take it away from us and from the people of this country.

The extraordinary history of TEA–21 has been that in the 42 years of the interstate highway program we invested $114 billion of Federal funds to build the 44,000-mile interstate highway system. In 4½ years of TEA–21, we invested $114 billion. We did in 4½ years what it took 42 years of the interstate highway program, and in the process we created 1½ million new jobs, the good jobs, the jobs that buy the homes and buy the cars and buy the household appliances and put the kids through school, jobs that have sustained the economic expansion of the last 7 years, until it hit the body with that recession that we are trying to creep out of.

The Highway Trust Fund is a dedicated account. It cannot be used for any other purpose. It can only be used for highway and transit funding. It can support more funding, and when we crafted TEA–21, we knew that the year-by-year levels that we authorized would be less than what could be spent. So we provided an additional $15 billion of authorizations over and above the amount specified year by year.

There is enough in the Highway Trust Fund now. There is a surplus of roughly $20 billion, and let us acknowledge that maybe 6 or $7 billion of that is already spoken for by forward funding of the States, but there is enough in there to support the level of funding that we authorized for this coming fiscal year for TEA–21, and we ought to do it. We ought to do it because if we for no other reason, the cost of congestion, the congestion tax in just 68 major metropolitan areas of the United States is $78 billion last year as verified by the Texas Transportation Institute in its report on congestion.

This is a bargain, $8.6 billion restored or $4.4 billion that we are trying to do in this bill. That is a bargain to help buy down the cost of congestion.

A key element of this bill is a sense of Congress that we will work together in a reauthorization to ensure that the revenue alignment mechanism of RABA is fine-tuned to more accurately align highway fund spending with highway revenues so as to have greater predictability and stability in highway funding.

I understand also that our chairman, gentleman from Alaska, has reached an agreement with the chairman of the Committee on Appropriations to attach the language of this bill to the supplemental appropriations bill instead of language that would have declared that the RABA mechanism shall have no force or effect. Now that is very serious language that would have had a very, very bad effect, and I think striking that language and supplanting our bill is a good agreement.

That agreement also has a dark side, and the dark side is that we also have to agree to authorize projects that were earmarked in the Transportation Appropriations Act this fiscal year that are ineligible for funding. I do not want to debate the merits of those particular projects, but I just want to focus on process.

This is an example of legislative process that is spinning out of control. In the last several years we have moved away from deliberative consideration of legislation, including transportation appropriations bills.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD). The time of the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. OBERSTAR) has expired. The gentleman from Alaska (Mr. YOUNG) has 12 minutes remaining.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. OBERSTAR).

Mr. OBERSTAR. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Alaska (Mr. YOUNG) for his generosity.

Two-thirds of the Members of this body did not serve in this body in prior years when there were different rules that now are routinely waived. We had transportation appropriations conference reports submitted to us at 7 a.m. on the day the bill is to be considered 2 hours later, no time for the staff of the majority or the minority to evaluate what is in those bills. Members were lucky if they saw a copy, let alone have an idea of what was in it.

Similarly, the other body no longer passes appropriation bills with numbered amendments, so that when they come over here from conference there is no opportunity to stand up and challenge a particular numbered amendment in an appropriation bill.

In 1993, Chairman Natcher of the Committee on Appropriations brought the transportation appropriation conference report with 63 amendments in disagreement. We could challenge each one of those. We no longer can do that.

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We no longer even have the time to consider in appropriate fashion what has been sent from the other body, whether in a conference report or otherwise.

Now we ought to know before we vote what we are voting on. We should know that bills that earmark interstate highway funds for projects that are not on the interstate are pending before us; we ought to know that the bill before us commits public lands funds for projects that do not involve Federal lands; that scenic byway funds are for a project that is not on a scenic byway; that bridge replacement funds are dedicated to a project that does not replace a bridge.

We are in the position in this committee of voting without having an opportunity to know what we are voting on and, therefore, to object to what we are voting on. We need to restore the deliberative process to this body's consideration of appropriation bills.

I know that I speak for myself, I know I speak for the Members on the Democratic side, and I know that I express the frustration that the chairman and members of our committee on the majority side have as well. Let us restore a deliberative process so that we can do the public's business in a fair and effective way.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the distinguished chairman for yielding this time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, the statements of my good friend, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. OBERSTAR), are absolutely true. I am hoping we can convince the

leadership on this side of the aisle, and, of course, the leadership on that side of the aisle, that what is sent to us from the other body in the waning hours of any session has been done inappropriately and that we have to have the time to make sure we are actually following the proper procedure and that we do not rush to leave this body and leave, very frankly, some things done inappropriately, as were done last year in October, because we do have to rectify that now.

I have let it be known to Members that went back to their districts and made statements of what they had achieved, and they had not achieved that, that I understand their dilemma. So this is a one-shot deal for them, and I hope everybody watching this in their office who are on that list makes sure they understand this is the only time they are going to get a chance to get projects agreed to, as it goes through our committee, or at least in consultation with the chairman and myself, and of course the ranking member. Because that is the appropriate way to do it.

The other body, the only way we can control that body is to reject what they send to us, and that takes a great deal of courage. I am hoping we have the courage to say no, not until we take the time to do what is right legislatively, with a great deal of deliberation, and the ability to do the job that we have been elected to do. This has been going on now for about 4 or 5 years, and I think it is time the House stands up and says no, this is not going to happen, you are not going to send us a great big bill, bigger than that room itself, and not know what is in it.

My staff and myself have spent time, primarily my staff, and I will admit that, just researching what was done last year to find out what projects were put in that were not authorized and, very frankly, took monies from projects that were authorized; and we do not think that is the correct way to go.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Maryland (Mrs. MORELLA).

Mrs. MORELLA. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for not only yielding me this time, but for his leadership on this issue, and I also commend the ranking member, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. OBERSTAR).

I just simply rise in support of this bill, H.R. 3694, because this bill, the Highway Funding Restoration Act, is going to restore no less than $66.5 million in highway funding in my State of Maryland, and that is going to represent 2,725 jobs. So I urge passage of the bill.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, I insert for the RECORD an exchange of letters between the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. NUSSLE), Chairman of the Committee on the Budget, which I referred to earlier.

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE,
Washington, DC, May 2, 2002.

Hon. JIM NUSSLE,
Chairman, Committee on Budget, Cannon Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you for your letter of May 2, 2002, regarding H.R. 3694, the Highway Funding Restoration Act and for your willingness to waive consideration of provisions in the bill that fall within your Committee's jurisdiction under House Rules.

I agree that your waiving consideration of relevant provisions of H.R. 3694 does not waive your Committee's jurisdiction over the bill. I also acknowledge your right to seek conferees on any provisions that are under your Committee's jurisdiction during any House-Senate conference on H.R. 3694 or similar legislation, and will support your request for conferees on such provisions.

As you request, your letter and this response will be included in the committee report on the legislation as well the Congressional Record during consideration on the House Floor.

Thank you for your cooperation in moving this important legislation.

Sincerely,

DON YOUNG,
Chairman.

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON THE BUDGET,
Washington, DC, May 2, 2002.

Hon. DON YOUNG,
Chairman, Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. YOUNG: On May 1, 2002 the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure ordered reported H.R. 3694, the Highway Funding Restoration Act. At introduction, H.R. 3694 was referred solely to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. In committee, however, an amendment was adopted that added three new sections to the bill. Section four, ''Adjustments to Guarantee Funding Levels,'' and section five ''Sense of Congress Regarding Revenue Aligned Budget Authority'' are within the primary jurisdiction of the Budget committee. I want to thank you for working closely with me to ensure that those provisions were acceptable to the Budget Committee.

Because of our close working relationship on this matter and in order to expedite the consideration of H.R. 3694, I do not intend to seek a sequential referral of the bill as ordered reported. In not seeking a sequential referral of H.R. 3694, the committee does not waive its jurisdiction or its prerogatives over this legislation. The Budget Committee also reserves its authority to seek conferees on H.R. 3694 or a similar Senate bill with respect to provisions that are within the committee's jurisdiction; and, I ask your commitment to support any such request by the Budget Committee.

Finally, I would ask that you include a copy of our exchange of letters on this matter in your committee report and in the Congressional Record during floor consideration. Thank you for your assistance and cooperation in this matter.

Sincerely,

JIM NUSSLE,
Chairman.

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to state my enthusiastic support of H.R. 3694, the Highway Funding Restoration Act.

First of all, I would like to salute the Chairman of the full Committee, the gentleman from Alaska (Mr. YOUNG), and the Chairman of the Subcommittee on Highways & Transit, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. Petri). Just as importantly, the leadership abilities of the ranking member of the full Committee, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. OBERSTAR), and the ranking member of the Subcommittee, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. BORSKI), were important components in this entire process.

I have been a member of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee since my first term, and things are no different now than in 1983. Smart investments in our nation's infrastructure brings about national economic benefits. It's estimated that every dollar invested in our highway system yield $2.60 in economic benefits.

As many of my colleagues in this body may know, the Administration's FY 2003 budget request would have reduced Federal-Aid highway funding to $23 billion down, which represents a dramatic decrease from FY 2002 funding levels.

Many of my colleagues were rightfully concerned at this funding request, and I shared those concerns. While $23 billion may sound like a lot of money and more than sufficient, the reality is much different. The real funding needs for our infrastructure already exceeds current funding levels by billions and billions. Needless to say, the proposed decrease would have caused potential transportation funding problems in every state and in every congressional district.

For my home state of Illinois, under the proposed budget, we would have seen a decrease of $236 million in highway funds in FY 2003, and there would have been serious ramifications across Illinois. Highway and road projects across Illinois would have been adversely impacted. Just as importantly, it could have also meant the loss of 10,000 jobs—jobs that we can ill afford to lose.

By restoring the highway funds to the levels authorized under TEA 21, Illinois would have nearly $139 million restored, and by funding our transportation needs in a fiscally responsible fashion, we all win.

I'm proud to be an original cosponsor of H.R. 3694. With nearly 320 cosponsors, it's clear to see that there is broad, bipartisan support for this bill. I urge all of my colleagues to vote for this important piece of legislation.

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico, Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 3694, the Highway Funding Restoration Act. This important legislation restores critical funding for the Federal-Aid Highway Program.

Upon enactment of TEA 21 in 1998, funding for the Federal-aid highway program was linked to highway user fee revenues deposited into the Highway Trust Fund. This was done partially by including a budgetary mechanism included in TEA 21 called Revenue Aligned Budget Authority (RABA), which adjusts the guaranteed amount of highway funding available to reflect the most recent estimates of Highway Trust Fund revenues.

An unexpected downturn in highway revenues caused by the RABA provision of TEA 21 resulted in a decrease of an $8.6 billion or 27 percent cut in highway funding in the President's FY 2003 budget proposal.

H.R. 3694 restores billions of critical dollars for our state departments of transportation as they cannot be expected to absorb a cut of this magnitude in one year, especially at a time when State revenues are also declining. The 27 percent cut in highway funds proposed

in the president's Budget will decimate State transportation programs, delay efforts to decrease road congestion and deny the traveling public all of the benefits that would result from reduced congestion—shortened travel times, increased productivity and economic growth, and improved safety.

This shortfall will have a severe negative impact on New Mexico and will result in a decrease of $69 million for the New Mexico State Highway and Transportation Department. For many in the Intermountain West, it is not unheard of for people to commute 70 miles to and from work. As a result, the transportation on our roadways is absolutely crucial. A loss of $69 million will cause the postponement of several important highway construction projects, as well as reductions in money spent on road maintenance. In addition, it is projected that New Mexico will lose an estimated 2,700 jobs as a result of the shortfall.

I am sure many other states will face similar funding and job losses if these monies are not restored for FY 03. Therefore, I urge my colleagues to join me in support of H.R. 3694 and avoid a devastating shortfall in state transportation budgets.

Mr. MATHESON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to give my full support to the passage of H.R. 3694, this is vital legislation, needed not just for our roads, bridges, and interchanges but also for our towns, our states, and our national economy.

There is no doubt that our economy is not expanding as it was just a couple of years ago. Unemployment is at a six year high and consumer confidence is low. There is a way, however, to provide good jobs, expand commerce, and make lasting investments in our country and that is to restore highway funding.

This year's budget has an $8.6 billion cut to federal-aid highways. The swings in our economy have translated into a wild swing in how we administer highway funding. Just last year, the Treasury Department predicted a $4.5 billion increase in funding levels, only to be faced with a $4.4 billion drop. We must now carefully choose our funding priorities.

Without the restoration of this money we will only exacerbate the economic downturn. In my home state of Utah, where highway funding is at a premium, these cuts mean a $55 million dollar shortfall in roadway funds. This means the loss of jobs and contracts-over 3,000 jobs in Utah alone and 180,000 jobs across the country.

Finally, we have already collected the taxes for the trust fund—it was paid by every person who filled a gas tank, rode a bus, or drove a car last year.

Mr. Speaker, this is a short-term fix. While the idea of Revenue Aligned Budget Authority has worked well in the past, it is clear that we need to adjust the formula to prevent future cuts from happening.

This is a uniquely bi-partisan and bicamerae bill that will immediately help all of our constituents and ensure that we continue to make good sound investments and create good, well paying jobs.

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, this Member rises in strong support of H.R. 3694, the Highway Funding Restoration Act.

This Member would like to begin by commending the distinguished gentleman from Alaska (Mr. YOUNG), the Chairman of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, and the distinguished gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. OBERSTAR), the ranking Member of the Committee, for their hard work in bringing this bill to the Floor. With 317 cosponsors, it is clear that the vast majority of House Members recognize the importance of H.R. 3694.

Mr. Speaker, Americans who pay the gas tax at the pump expect those dollars to be used for roads and other transportation expenses, and they expect that the money will be made available promptly. Any budget decision to spend less on road construction and maintenance would be a bad fiscal decision as we attempt to move from an economic recession. It would be a serious mistake to cut infrastructure spending at this critical time.

The bill would restore a minimum of $4.4 billion for highway programs in the budget. This would bring highway funding back to the level anticipated when the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA–21) was enacted. For the State of Nebraska, this legislation would result in the restoration of $32 million.

The Highway Trust Fund contains a surplus of about $20 billion—money already paid in gas taxes. Motorists deserve to have these funds used expeditiously for transportation purposes, rather than to accumulate huge trust fund surpluses.

Mr. Speaker, as an original cosponsor of this bill, this Member urges his colleagues to support H.R. 3694.

Mr. BALDACCI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 3694, the Highway Funding Restoration Act. This bill restores $4.4 billion in transportation funding and brings us back to the TEA–21 floor of $27.7 billion. It also ensures that this funding will be used to repair decrepit roads and bridges by placing it behind TEA–21's firewalls.

Every state in America will be affected by the $8.8 billion reduction in highway funding proposed by President Bush. While the RABA formula was responsible for the large upswing in FY2002 and the large downturn in FY2003, we must continue to tie gas tax receipts to Trust Fund expenditures to ensure that surpluses are not kept artificially high for budgetary gimmicks.

The President and this Congress have the authority to restore this critical funding, and I am pleased that we are here today to take the first step. H.R. 3694 sets a funding floor of $27.7 billion, a $4.4 billion improvement over President Bush's budget proposal. However, I believe that we can and must do better.

I understand that the Senate is considering doing somewhat better and restoring $5.7 billion. Such an increase can be sustained by the Trust Fund given the current $20 billion surplus and projected receipts. I urge the House to work with the other body to achieve at least that amount.

The $8.8 billion reduction contained in the President's budget request would result in a $37 million decrease in funding for my state. H.R. 3694 restores about $22 million leaving a $15 million difference. Maine's transportation needs are significant, and the backlog of roads and bridges in need of repair continually grows. Harsh winter weather and extensive use by both tourists and heavy trucks take their toll on our roads.

Currently, Maine needs to repair 4,000 miles of its estimated 8,300 highway miles. In its biennial budget, only 200 of these miles can be repaired. At this rate Maine will finish its arterial highways in 8 years, and major collectors in 34 years. That pace is obviously insufficient to maintain the safe and reliable transportation network that is crucial to my state's economic future.

Closing the remaining $15 million deficit would allow the repair of approximately 30 additional miles. While this number may seem small, 30 miles can be critical in providing safe access to rural Maine communities.

Mr. Speaker, I also strongly support Section 6 of this bill which specifically authorizes 49 projects which encountered eligibility problems. Three of these projects are located in Maine. It is absolutely critical that this funding go forward to assist the communities of Brewer, Portland and Aroostook County.

I want to reiterate that the funding level we are setting here today is a floor, not a ceiling. I am supporting this legislation as a first step in ensuring that the infrastructure needs of our communities in Maine and throughout the country can be met. I hope that we will work to go beyond this floor and restore the remaining funding that our states need and deserve.

Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 3694, the Highway Funding Restoration Act, critical legislation introduced by my friend and colleague, Mr. YOUNG.

As you know, Mr. Speaker, under TEA–21, funding for the federal-aid highway program was linked to highway user fee revenues deposited into the Highway Trust Fund (HTF). This was achieved in part by a budgetary mechanism called RABA, the Revenue Aligned Budget Authority, which adjusts the guaranteed amount of highway funding available to reflect the most recent estimates of HTF revenues. Due to an unexpected downturn in highway revenues (attributable to a decline in gas, tire, and truck sales, and the overall economic recession), the President's FY 2003 budget proposed an $8.6 billion, or 27 percent cut in highway funding. H.R. 3694 restores $4.4 billion to the highway program (a return to TEA–21's FY 2003 levels), and preserves TEA–21 ''firewalls,'' ensuring that the additional money will be spent on highway projects.

House passage of this legislation will send an important message that these funds will be available to states to continue work on vital transportation projects. TEA–21 was a huge win for Virginia, resulting in hundreds of millions of dollars more each year in federal aid for transportation projects. This funding meant progress in our fight against traffic congestion, enhanced highway safety, and thousands of jobs—good, family-wage jobs we can't afford to lose. Halting this progress by cutting funding 27 percent would be devastating to Virginia, to our local economies, and to the men and women whose livelihood depends on transportation-related projects.

Many projects critical to the continued improvement of Virginia's transportation infrastructure are currently in the works or being planned—while many others are being set aside due to funding shortages at the state and local levels. In my Northern Virginia congressional district, safety, quality of life and the overall economy depend largely on maintaining TEA–21 funding. I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this legislation.

Mr. CLEMENT. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 3694, the Highway Funding Restoration Act and I want to thank Chairman

YOUNG, Ranking Member OBERSTAR and my other colleagues from the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee for their leadership on this important bill. The President's proposed 2003 Budget cuts federal-aid highway funding in my state of Tennessee by over $158 million. The loss of these funds will result in the layoffs of thousands of hardworking Tennesseans—approximately 6,000 lost jobs—as the state cuts back on bidding out projects at a time when we should be creating jobs, not eliminating them.

This unprecedented cut will put the brakes on highway improvement projects not just in Tennessee, but throughout the country. After September 11th, we need to ensure adequate mobility for our national defense. The cuts offered by the President won't help our mobility and, in fact, stand to increase congestion and safety hazards for the motoring public. The state aid formula in TEA–21 was meant to establish a floor, not a ceiling, and the President is giving states the minimum at a time when the economy cries out for more investment in our transportation infrastructure.

That is why we must rally to enact the Highway Funding Restoration Act and restore $4.4 billion for our highways. Of this amount, this measure would restore $92 million or approximately 58% of Tennessee's lost highway funds. Although I would like to see the entire funding level of $158 million for Tennessee returned to the budget, I support this compromise to save roads and jobs in Tennessee and across the nation.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting the bill before us.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, Federal investment in transportation is critical to moving our nation's people, goods, and economy. Maintaining and meeting our federal commitment to transportation spending is an important first step.

I was proud to serve on the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee that authored the 1998 Federal surface transportation-spending bill entitled TEA–21 (the Transportation Equity Act for the Twenty-first Century). This legislation provided record levels of guaranteed funding for highways, bridges, transit, and enhancement programs. In addition to funding, it also created a policy framework that emphasizes good planning, with a focus on public participation and environmental goals. All of these factors are critical tools to building more livable communites—where families have choices about how they travel and where they live.

I was greatly concerned when earlier this year, the Bush Administration proposed in its fiscal year 2003 Budget a significant decrease in transportation spending from what Congress approved last year. This cut of $8.6 billion, or a 27 percent reduction in highway funding, is based on the Revenue Aligned Budget Authority (RABA) provision of TEA–21. The need for infrastructure management, improvement, and new capacity has only increased and this funding is critical to the transportation plans in many communities. In Oregon alone, the impact is a loss of almost $51 million.

As an original co-sponsor of H.R. 3694, I was proud to join with other members of Congress in sending a strong signal that our federal commitment to transportation infrastructure must be met. This bill would increase fiscal year 2003 highway funding by at least $4.4 billion above the level requested in the President's Budget.

Some have argued that since highway programs benefited from RABA in previous years, that they must now suffer the negative consequences, too. While this seems a logical argument, there are some important variables that come into play. Perhaps the most glaring is the impact that such a large cut would have on state transportation departments. Many state DOTs are already facing funding constraints while they are also struggling to maintain existing roads and provide solutions to reducing the growing levels of traffic congestion. Second, transportation spending keeps people employed building infrastructure critical to economic growth. Cutting highway spending by 27 percent would lead to significant job loss and threaten our economic recovery. Finally, there is already a cash balance in the Highway Trust Fund of roughly $20 billion that could be used to help restore the $4.4 billion proposed in this bill.

In the upcoming year Congress will begin reauthorizing TEA–21. This will be an important opportunity to re-examine federal transportation policies and funding levels, including the RABA provision. I encourage my colleagues today to pass this bill and help restore the much-needed highway funding that will help states meet their transportation needs, help keep the economy growing, and help to build more livable communities.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Alaska (Mr. YOUNG) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3694, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds of those present have voted in the affirmative.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFIT ENHANCEMENTS FOR WOMEN ACT OF 2002

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4069) to amend title II of the Social Security Act provide for miscellaneous enhancements in Social Security benefits, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 4069

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE AND TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the ''Social Security Benefit Enhancements for Women Act of 2002''.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title and table of contents.

TITLE I—BENEFIT ENHANCEMENTS

Sec. 101. Repeal of 7-year restriction on eligibility for widow's and widower's insurance benefits based on disability.

Sec. 102. Exemption from two-year waiting period for divorced spouse's benefits upon other spouse's remarriage.

Sec. 103. Months ending after deceased individual's death disregarded in applying early retirement rules with respect to deceased individual for purposes of limitation on widow's and widower's benefits.

TITLE II—AMENDMENTS TO THE INTERNAL REVENUE CODE OF 1986

Sec. 201. Exclusion from gross income for interest on overpayments of income tax by individuals.

Sec. 202. Deposits made to suspend running of interest on potential underpayments.

Sec. 203. Partial payment of tax liability in installment agreements.

TITLE I—BENEFIT ENHANCEMENTS

SEC. 101. REPEAL OF 7-YEAR RESTRICTION ON ELIGIBILITY FOR WIDOW'S AND WIDOWER'S INSURANCE BENEFITS BASED ON DISABILITY.

(a) WIDOW'S INSURANCE BENEFITS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 202(e) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 402(e)) is amended—

(A) in paragraph (1)(B)(ii), by striking ''which began before the end of the period specified in paragraph (4)'';

(B) in paragraph (1)(F)(ii), by striking ''(I) in the period specified in paragraph (4) and (II)'';

(C) by striking paragraph (4) and by redesignating paragraphs (5) through (9) as paragraphs (4) through (8), respectively; and

(D) in paragraph (4)(A)(ii) (as redesignated), by striking ''whichever'' and all that follows through ''begins'' and inserting ''the first day of the seventeenth month before the month in which her application is filed''.

(2) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(A) Section 202(e)(1)(F)(i) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 402(e)(1)(F)(i)) is amended by striking ''paragraph (5)'' and inserting ''paragraph (4)''.

(B) Section 202(e)(1)(C)(ii)(III) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 402(e)(2)(C)(ii)(III)) is amended by striking ''paragraph (8)'' and inserting ''paragraph (7)''.

(C) Section 202(e)(2)(A) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 402(e)(2)(A)) is amended by striking ''paragraph (7)'' and inserting ''paragraph (6)''.

(D) Section 226(e)(1)(A)(i) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 426(e)(1)(A)(i)) is amended by striking ''202(e)(4),''.

(b) WIDOWER'S INSURANCE BENEFITS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 202(f) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 402(f)) is amended—

(A) in paragraph (1)(B)(ii), by striking ''which began before the end of the period specified in paragraph (5)'';

(B) in paragraph (1)(F)(ii), by striking ''(I) in the period specified in paragraph (5) and (II)'';

(C) by striking paragraph (5) and by redesignating paragraphs (6) through (9) as paragraphs (5) through (8), respectively; and

(D) in paragraph (5)(A)(ii) (as redesignated), by striking ''whichever'' and all that follows through ''begins'' and inserting ''the first day of the seventeenth month before the month in which his application is filed''.

(2) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(A) Section 202(f)(1)(F)(i) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 402(f)(1)(F)(i)) is amended by striking ''paragraph (6)'' and inserting ''paragraph (5)''.