

very difficult circumstances when several trains derailed inside a tunnel; and it was very, very clear to us in Baltimore, we waited with bated breath for information coming from them.

Although we had other people working at the scene, and our local people were working and working very hard, it was the NTSB that clearly was taking the lead in helping us to try to figure out how do we go along slowly; do we have hazardous materials.

So while we are still waiting for a final determination, the fact is, they were very helpful to us all along the way.

So often, what happens in circumstances is that we take so much for granted when we have an organization like the National Transportation Safety Board and just assume they are always going to be there, that they have enough money, that everything is going to be okay, and that we are not going to need them.

The fact is that these things do happen. No one would have guessed that in the middle of Baltimore's downtown area, right at the stadium site, our two stadium sites, we would have had this incident happen, which basically closed down our downtown for several days. But thank God that the NTSB was there.

Therefore, I stand with the gentleman from Florida (Chairman MICA) and certainly our ranking member, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. OBERSTAR), and all the members of our Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure in supporting this very, very important reauthorization.

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

Mr. MICA. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased today, on behalf of the gentleman from Alaska (Chairman YOUNG), chairman of the full Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, to bring to the floor for reauthorization the National Transportation Safety Board legislation. It is vital, as we have heard from the previous speakers, to continue the good work, the professionalism, and the investigative authority to this agency.

It is also a pleasure for me to help reauthorize a rather lean, well-run Federal agency that does, again, an excellent job with a limited number of staff.

With those remarks, Mr. Speaker, I am also pleased to compliment Marion Blakey, who has assumed the chairmanship last year of this important investigative arm of our government, and also compliment her on the outstanding job she has done in communicating with me since her taking office. This has continued from the horrible events of November 12, when the American airliner crashed in Long Island, through the very serious and fatal accident we had in my district in Florida involving the Amtrak auto train. So I thank the Chair of this agency for her cooperation, and I thank those involved with the agency for their work.

Finally, again, I thank the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. OBERSTAR), the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. LIPINSKI), and the gentleman from Alaska (Mr. YOUNG) for their bipartisan effort to move H.R. 4466 for reauthorization of the NTSB to the floor.

Mr. CLEMENT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 4466, the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) Reauthorization Act of 2002. In addition to the many positive attributes already mentioned by my colleagues regarding the NTSB and their excellent service to our country, I want to particularly note the provisions in H.R. 4466 included from the Rail Passenger Disaster Family Assistance Act. These provisions allow the NTSB to provide needed assistance to the families of victims of catastrophic railroad accidents, similar to the role that the NTSB already plays in aviation accidents. Additionally, it requires intercity passenger railroads to submit a plan to the Secretary of Transportation and the Chairman of the NTSB to address the needs of families of passengers involved in accidents resulting in major loss of life. The plan must include procedures for notifying family members, developing passenger lists, and coordinating information to family members regarding an accident.

By passing this bill, we send the message that the safety of our transportation system is of the utmost importance to our citizens and Nation. I urge the adoption of this piece of legislation and extend my compliments to Chairman YOUNG, Chairman MICA, and Ranking Member OBERSTAR for their good work on this important bill.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CULBERSON). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MICA) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4466, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MICA. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous matter on the bill, H.R. 4466, as amended.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Florida?

There was no objection.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message in writing from the President of the United States was communicated to the House by Ms. Wanda Evans, one of his secretaries.

□ 1515

HOLOCAUST RESTITUTION TAX FAIRNESS ACT OF 2002

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill

(H.R. 4823) to repeal the sunset of the Economic Growth and Tax Relief Reconciliation Act of 2001 with respect to the exclusion from Federal income tax for restitution received by victims of the Nazi Regime.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 4823

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 "Holocaust Restitution Tax Fairness Act of 2002".

SEC. 2. REPEAL OF APPLICABILITY OF SUNSET OF THE ECONOMIC GROWTH AND TAX RELIEF RECONCILIATION ACT OF 2001 WITH RESPECT TO EXCLUSION FROM FEDERAL INCOME TAX FOR RESTITUTION RECEIVED BY VICTIMS OF NAZI REGIME.

Section 901 of the Economic Growth and Tax Relief Reconciliation Act of 2001 is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

"(C) EXCEPTION.—Subsection (a) shall not apply to section 803 (relating to no federal income tax on restitution received by victims of the Nazi regime or their heirs or estates)."

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CULBERSON). Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. SHAW) and the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida (Mr. SHAW).

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

(Mr. SHAW asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks and include extraneous material.)

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to be the sponsor of this important piece of legislation, H.R. 4823, the Holocaust Restitution Tax Fairness Act. It exempts Holocaust survivors from taxation any restitution claims they received for the crimes committed against them by Nazi Germany.

The bill permanently extends a provision of The Economic Growth and Tax Reconciliation Act that makes such claims tax-free. Like the rest of the tax cut signed into law by President Bush last year, this provision sunsets in 2010. Today we are taking action to provide that for as long as the victims and their heirs receive Holocaust-related claims, they will be tax-free.

In recent years settlement agreements worth billions of dollars for Holocaust survivors have been reached. Although no amount of money could ever compensate the victims of the Holocaust for the crimes committed against them, it would be wrong for the United States Tax Code to treat these modest settlements as some sort of financial windfall. Current estimates are that there will be 88,000 Holocaust survivors in 2010 when the tax cuts sunset, many of whom reside in my South Florida district. Congress should be prepared to give these survivors the security of at least knowing that their settlement claims will not be subject to the hands of the Internal Revenue Service.

Mr. Speaker, it is as simple as this: When something is stolen from you,