

this bill could help to fund 736 worthy, needed, and fully-screened transit projects that could be started in less than 90 days. Increasing funding for capital transit systems will help states to create new jobs quickly, the precise goal that H.R. 1 seeks to accomplish.

Additionally, this funding will help local transit agencies meet increased demand for public transit nationwide. In the first half of 2008, demand for public transit rose 4.4 percent over the record highs of 2007. In New Jersey, NJ Transit is providing more than 900,000 weekday trips on its trains, buses and light-rail vehicles. Public transit agencies are struggling to keep up with demand, and many of them are considering raising their fares in order to afford necessary improvements to their facilities. This amendment would provide this much needed funding to keep public transportation moving and affordable.

Supporting public transportation, especially passenger rail, should be a central element of our national strategy to slow the rate of global climate change and reduce our dependence on foreign fuels. Passenger rail consumes 21 percent less energy per passenger mile than automobiles and 17 percent less than airplanes. It releases half the amount of greenhouse gases per passenger mile as either air or car travel. Public transportation is an essential component of easing traffic congestion, reducing wear and tear on roads, protecting our environment, and preserving open space in New Jersey and across the country.

This amendment will create jobs, protect our environment, and aid struggling public transit agencies, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

IN HONOR OF BILL MELDRUM

HON. FRANK PALLONE, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 2, 2009

Mr. PALLONE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Bill Meldrum, 53, captain of the trawler Lydia J, who tragically passed away on the morning of January 27 in a deck accident. Captain Meldrum, the secretary of the Board of Directors of the Point Pleasant Fisherman's Dock Cooperative, had been a fisherman in New Jersey for over 30 years—20 years out of the Belford Seafood Co-Op in my district, and 10 years out of Point Pleasant. He is described by the Fisherman's Dock Cooperative as "having a heart of gold" and "one of their best." Captain Meldrum is survived by his wife, Isabel, whom he wed in August of 2008.

Captain Meldrum purchased the Lydia J in 1989 with his friend Gary Traczyk. Already an experienced seaman, the purchase of the Lydia J allowed Captain Meldrum to continue sweeping the New Jersey coast for summer flounder, scallops, black flounder, whiting, and squid. The Lydia J was his pride and joy, and Captain Meldrum was known to stand tall and proud whenever he approached the 65 foot dragger.

Recreational and commercial fishing is not only essential to the economy of New Jersey's sixth district, but is a way of life for many of its residents. A fisherman through and through, Captain Meldrum exemplified the blue-collar strength of New Jersey's coastal

community. Not only was he able to live his dream and fish for a living, he was constantly giving back to his community. Captain Meldrum donated toys to children every Christmas and always took special care of his fellow fishermen.

Madam Speaker, I sincerely hope that my colleagues will join me in remembering the late Captain Meldrum. Everyday fishermen risk their lives on the open water to put food on our tables, and on Tuesday morning they lost one of their best in Bill Meldrum.

“ON THE RECORD INAUGURAL
SPEECH CONTEST”

HON. JOHN P. SARBANES

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 2, 2009

Mr. SARBANES. Madam Speaker, I rise today to share the award winning entry from the Meritalk “On the Record Inaugural Speech Contest.” Meritalk is an online community that seeks to promote civic discussion and serve as the crossroads for IT and public policy. This contest challenged American authors to write a speech highlighting what they would like to hear from the President-elect on Inauguration day. This a wonderful example of how the Internet can help Americans become more aware of and involved in government. I would like to congratulate the winner, Ms. Katherine Grayson, on writing a very eloquent speech and I hope she remains engaged in the important issues facing our country. I'd also like to share her contest entry with you today.

“My fellow citizens of the world. I cannot greet you today using the phrase “My fellow Americans,” for though, assuredly, America is facing its greatest challenges in half a century, we now are part of a much vaster order with challenges that put even our own, here at home, into proper perspective.

We stand at the precipice of a New Age; an age in which we clearheadedly acknowledge that the world has become a network as intricately intertwined as a web. In ways too numerous to count, we now are connected to one another across this land, across the seas, across the airwaves, across cyberspace. The era of rattling sabers at one another or constructing foreign policy as though we dwell inside fortresses, is long over. Our world today is indeed a complex and inexorably interwoven network of threads, and to survive and flourish within it, no successful international policy will ever again be identified as “foreign.” Once we only dreamt of such connectedness with the world; now we truly are a global network of nations, states, citizens, and the children everywhere who are our hope for the future.

Yet by clinging to attitudes of the past, we have been slashing away at this fragile new mesh of mankind and weakening it, the world at large, and our own position in that world. Shall we continue to allow this planet to become a more and more dangerous place, with aggression, resentment, and even silence between countries expanding as rapidly as their arsenals do? Or shall we at last—and with the determination of what has long been the greatest nation on this Earth—seek to strengthen the ties between the world's na-

tions, and help to construct, finally, a lasting fabric of world peace and understanding?

All of you who hear me today, wherever you may be, must be partners in this quest to make the world a refuge for all. We are now inextricably tied to one another, wherever we are, and rather than curse the condition of our connectedness, we must protect that connectedness at all cost.

Now we are partners in the mission to end the scourge of terrorism and the outrageous inequities of life that feed it: poverty, powerlessness, the daily struggle to survive. It is just too easy for us to think of ourselves as separate “constituencies” of the world, nameless people lost in faceless masses hoping to be served by their leadership. From today, henceforth, we are partners in the mandate to make the world a much less dangerous place; to bring a New Age of peace and understanding to our fellow men and women, wherever they may reside on our planet. We are partners in the challenge to bring the peoples of the world together, rather than shut them out through our fear and our ignorance.

These are no small challenges. But neither are they dreams.

How shall we set about to change the world as it must change, if we are to endure in the decades and centuries to come?

First, by re-forging and strengthening the fabric of our lives here at home. To put it plainly, right now we are no example for the other nations of the world. Through a long series of misjudgments and missteps, wrong-headed international decisions and self-interested actions here at home, our nation has come to forfeit that position and that privilege. We must face the fact that we have lost our way; that in the cycles of history, we have suffered a downward turn.

Clearly, our economy—once the envy of the world—is in trouble. We must confront this truth head-on. And while quick fixes and mammoth infusions of capital are band-aids designed to temporarily stabilize floundering financial vessels like Fannie Mae and AIG, as in most critical financial downturns we need to look to the core of these very serious problems and re-examine, re-tool, and rebuild the fundamentals of our economic structure, if necessary. And I strongly believe it is necessary.

Yet what are the fundamentals of that system? They are capitalistic, to be sure. But that term, capitalism—which once had the sweet ring of democracy to it—has come to take on a sour taste indeed.

Since when do the tenets of capitalism dictate that company CEOs can become robber barons? Where is it written that employees can lose their pensions to the senior management of the corporations they have dutifully served for decades? Which principles decreed that hardworking, law-abiding folks should lose their homes and life savings because the mortgages they took out were based upon Wall Street hocus-pocus of which they could have no knowledge or understanding whatsoever? Why does capitalism preclude a government's ability to ensure that all citizens are provided adequate health care and social security so that they neither succumb to illness nor die homeless on the street? And which founding father (who had himself fled from the tyranny of taxation without representation) declared that the best way to build a financially able and resilient society was to tax the working backbone of the nation until it collapsed

under the weight of those taxes—all the while giving tax cuts and breaks to the wealthiest citizens, corporations, and conglomerates?

No nation on Earth has ever flourished for any length of time by bleeding the life force of its own inception. We should know this; our nation was born out of rebellion against such tyranny; we have supported other nations of the world in their quests for similar freedoms; we have railed against such injustices thrust upon other peoples of the world.

We must return—with haste and urgency—to those principles we have fought and died for, and which we know to be just, fair, and right. We must return—without a moment's hesitation—to those principles, which we know from centuries of proof, build a strong nation of happy, prosperous, contributing citizens; that backbone that is the framework upon which any free and thriving nation must be built.

I have not been brought to this moment today, here at this podium before you, to tell you this because I believe it is what you want to hear. I am here today, telling you this, because on November 4th, you knew in your hearts that a swift, decisive return to the principles of America for all its citizens—not an America for only the wealthiest citizens—is the way to rebuild our nation, and to begin to rebuild our relationships with the other nations of the world.

Let this be the moment in history when the phrase, "The Rich and Powerful" is relegated to its proper, smaller place in the world scheme, and the phrase "Power to the People" returns to its rightful position, above all else. For it was not until the people took back their power through a fair and just democratic process—as you did this past November—that "power" in this country could regain perspective at last. In the world today, "power" simply cannot denote the right of some to profit at the expense of others. "Power" must stand for the ability to make change happen for the long-term health and survival of our nation, and as a model for making change happen for the health and survival of our planet and the nations of our world.

We know that it was the driving need for change that brought us here today. I did not spend these past two years chanting "Change!" because I thought it was the best way to get elected. I have fought for that change and will continue to fight for it because only through fearless, courageous, unmitigated change can we right our foundering ship quickly, decisively, with long-lasting results that must not be delayed. There is not one moment to waste. The need is critical, pervasive, and non-partisan, and we cannot tolerate time spent for political parties to bicker or equivocate.

You are the partners in this change. This is not Congress's change; it is yours, and your voices must be heard. My question to you is: How quickly do you need this change?

How quickly—and most importantly, how effectively, for lasting benefit—do you want your jobs, homes, livelihoods restored? How quickly and solidly do you want the United States of America to be respected in the world theater once more? How soon do you want your sons and daughters to return from wars which should never have been waged? How rapidly do you want the fear between nations to de-escalate, and fear of terrorism and nuclear arms buildups to dissipate? How soon do you

want to fling wide the doors of misunderstanding between cultures that fear each other, and let in the fresh clean air of tolerance and acceptance? In what timeframe do you want to see the nations of the world cooperate with each other for mutual benefit, and thus remove the very need for state-driven or state-supported terrorism? And when is it that you would you like to see our planet's environment begin to recover from the ravages and ills which now place it in peril of ecological collapse?

I ask you now: Which day do you want to be a safer day for your children? The tomorrow after tomorrow?

Well, I have children too, and I need that day to be today.

So, today is the day that—together—we will set about to change our world. And though we will begin here at home at once, we will aggressively and immediately pursue our new international initiatives simultaneously. These next 100 days may be dizzying for Congress here on Capitol Hill, but we will expect nothing less from its members than their full and intensive attention to every new idea, every new plan, every new proposal put before them. I promise you that I will compel democrats and republicans to work together with me, hand in hand, with blind eyes to red or blue, and eyes only on the target ahead. I promise you that we will use our new connectedness with each other and the world, in ways that have never been seen before, to make change happen. And we will not rest until we make serious, impactful, and lasting headway.

I call upon you—not just the people of America, but the peoples of the world—to make your voices heard; to see these needs are met; to convey your sense of urgency for the triumph of our country, our world, this beloved planet. This time, broad, bold, far-reaching measures are needed, and we will not be held at bay by the petty prevarication or self-interest of the few, or by the endless squabbling over minutiae—not when there is so much, and the lives of so very many, at stake. Tomorrow I lead the charge, full-throttle toward our next decade in this Brave New Age. But it is together that we will make it reality. Let no man or woman on Earth stand up before us and say it cannot be done. Yes, it can."

AMERICAN RECOVERY AND REINVESTMENT ACT OF 2009

SPEECH OF

HON. CLIFF STEARNS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 28, 2009

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 1) making supplemental appropriations for job preservation and creation, infrastructure investment, energy efficiency and science, assistance to the unemployed, and State and local fiscal stabilization, for fiscal year ending September 30, 2009, and for other purposes:

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Chair, with America facing a 7.2 percent unemployment rate, record low consumer confidence, and country's worst economic downturn since the beginning of World War II, our nation needs a real economic stimulus that will give tax relief to hurt-

ing American businesses, create long term sustainable job growth, and provide real permanent tax relief to American families. What this country does not need is the federal government increasing our national debt to record levels, burying our children and our grandchildren under a mountain of debt.

This Democrat spending plan is simply not stimulative. According to CBO, the plan includes \$604 billion in new spending and \$212 billion in tax cuts for a total cost of \$816 billion over the 2009 to 2019 period. While this plan is aimed at quickly injecting government cash into the economy, only 15 percent, or \$93 billion, of the spending will occur during this fiscal year and only 37 percent of the spending would occur in fiscal year 2010. This means that over half of the plan's spending will occur starting in 2011, hardly a quick injection into the lagging economy as promised by the Democrat authors. What is clearly evident is that much of this money will not be spent in the next two years to stimulate the economy and that billions of dollars in pork barrel spending will go to constituencies important to the Democrat party. This is far too important of an economic time to play political games and return election favors in the form of government funding. Our country needs a real economic stimulus package.

Included in this Democrat spending spree are longstanding liberal spending priorities. What does \$50 million for the National Endowment for the Arts, \$400 million for climate change research, \$650 million for the Digital-to-Analog Converter Box Program and \$1 billion for the Census have to do with creating jobs? The Democrat bill won't stimulate anything but more government and more debt. The slow and wasteful spending in the House Democrat bill is a disservice to millions of Americans who want to see this Congress take immediate action to get this economy moving again.

Many have looked to our economic history to provide guidance during this difficult time, particularly to the New Deal instituted by President Franklin Roosevelt. Unfortunately, what many economists have found is that New Deal principles are stale ideas that do not translate into economic stimulus in the 21st century.

First, the Great Depression began in 1929 and did not end until 1940. And the stock market did not return to the level of September 3, 1929 until 1954. If today's economy were to go through a similar "recovery," we would not fully escape the current recession until 2018 and the Dow would not reach its high of 2007 until sometime in 2032.

Secondly, many economists note that during the Great Depression the U.S. did not actually have much of an expansionary fiscal policy. As Tyler Cowen stated in the New York Times article, "The New Deal Didn't Always Work, Either," "under President Herbert Hoover and continuing with Roosevelt, the federal government increased income taxes, excise taxes, inheritance taxes, corporate income taxes, holding company taxes and 'excess profits' taxes. When all of these tax increases are taken into account, New Deal fiscal policy didn't do much to promote recovery."

This legislation is also an unprecedented expansion of the nation's debt burden. The U.S. is projected to have a \$1.2 trillion deficit in FY 2009 even without the enactment of any stimulus legislation. As a percentage of GDP,