

Finally, Mary McMillan is much beloved by everyone who knows her. It is a tribute to a person who has been in the public eye for so long that everyone has a wonderful story to relate about her character and judgment, as well as her personal kindness.

Mr. Speaker, this retirement will be a tremendous loss for San Mateo. The county may someday have another advocate, but it will be hard-pressed to find such a talented steward of its trust. We wish Mary McMillan well on her next journey in life. We have no doubt that, wherever she goes, she will continue to be the mouse that roars.

INTRODUCTION OF THE UPDATE, PROMOTE AND DEVELOP AMERICA'S TRANSPORTATION ESSENTIALS ACT OF 2013, AND THE ROAD USER FEE PILOT PROJECT ACT OF 2013

**HON. EARL BLUMENAUER**

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, December 3, 2013*

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, today, I am introducing two pieces of legislation to address America's infrastructure deficit and put Americans back to work renewing and rebuilding the country. For the past decade, it has been clear that our transportation funding mechanism is broken, and Republicans and Democrats alike danced around the critical issue of how to fund our nation's infrastructure. During this time, Congress transferred more than \$50 billion of general fund money to the Highway Trust Fund in an effort to keep the Highway Trust Fund alive, but did nothing to solve the long-term problem.

In the past infrastructure funding was a bipartisan issue. Whether it was Democrats and Republicans coming together to launch the interstate freeway system signed into law by President Eisenhower or the subsequent road, transit, and water investments that fueled economic development and tied the nation together, a spirit of forward-thinking cooperation dominated. The recent failure to address our long-term funding problem has also been bipartisan. Despite strong recommendations from private-sector commissions created during the Bush Administration, the forward momentum of the past has been stopped dead in its tracks.

The gap between Highway Trust Fund assets and our nation's future needs is growing as the condition of our roads, bridges, and transit systems continues to deteriorate. There is no question about the importance of our nation's infrastructure to the general economy. America's roads, bridges, and rail lines move goods valued at more than \$11 trillion a year. The failure to make adequate transportation investments puts America at a competitive disadvantage internationally, it complicates movement of goods and people, and it contributes to congestion and pollution. In fact, the American Society for Civil Engineers estimates that if we fail to increase funding in our nation's infrastructure, our transportation failures will restrict our national GDP growth by \$897 billion by 2020. To avoid these outcomes, blue ribbon policy commissions have suggested increasing investment in infrastructure from between \$20 billion to \$40 billion per year.

Unfortunately, Congress has not increased the gas tax since the Clinton deficit-reduction program in 1993. Today, with inflation and increased fuel efficiency for vehicles, the average motorist is paying about half as much per mile as they did then. In this situation, the Highway Trust Fund will require \$15 billion a year to maintain current spending levels. In less than a year, absent Congressional action, we face a precipitous drop in transportation funding—eventually totaling a 30 percent reduction in 10 years. Increased fuel efficiency exacerbates that deficit even more over time.

There is a broad and persuasive coalition that recognizes the importance of an increased investment in our infrastructure. From the Chamber of Commerce, to the AFL-CIO, the American Trucking Association, the Sierra Club, and the League of American Bicyclists, individuals, businesses, and associations across the spectrum are ready to invest in America's infrastructure. Today, I am putting forward a vision for how Congress should go about renewing and rebuilding the country.

My first piece of legislation, the Update, Promote, and Develop America's Transportation Essentials (UPDATE) Act, will phase in a fifteen cent per gallon gas tax increase, similar to what was called for in the Simpson-Bowles deficit reduction proposal of three years ago. It is adjusted for inflation so that we're not back into the same situation in a few years, and acknowledges the long-term inadequacy of the gas tax by clarifying that this should be the last gas tax increase. The UPDATE Act would raise around \$170 billion over ten years.

This would have a powerful effect on the economy. The relatively small amount infrastructure investment in the Recovery Act had a significant impact on employment, creating almost 36,000 jobs for each billion invested. These are family wage jobs in every community across America.

Instituting a reasonable gas tax increase now stops the dance of avoidance. It will provide the revenues Democrats say they want in the form of a user fee which historically has been acceptable to Republicans including Ronald Reagan, who increased the gas tax by a nickel a gallon in 1982 (the equivalent of raising it by \$0.12 a gallon in today's dollars). As we extend the gas tax, we must also think about how to replace it with something more sustainable. The best candidate would be the vehicle mile traveled fee being explored by pilot projects in Oregon and implemented there on a voluntary basis next year. My second piece of legislation provides research funding for larger-scale pilot projects to answer remaining questions about how best to implement a vehicle miles traveled system, appropriate revenue collection mechanisms, and other potential applications for such a system. This bill looks to the future and helps provide a more stable funding base for the next one hundred years.

Addressing the infrastructure deficit, stabilizing transportation funding, and helping America's all-too-slow economic recovery, is critical if we want a livable and economically prosperous country in the years to come. All we need to make it happen is a commitment to build the future together.

HONORING THE MAYOR OF BECKLEY, WEST VIRGINIA EMMETT S. PUGH III

**HON. NICK J. RAHALL II**

OF WEST VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, December 3, 2013*

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, many of us recall one of the lessons of the late Speaker Tip O'Neil who advised us, if "a constituent calls about a problem, even if it's a streetlight out, you don't tell him to call City Hall. You call City Hall."

That is a lesson in government service that those at the helm in City Halls across this nation know all too well. I refer, of course, to our mayors—the mayors of America who gladly take calls, 24/7, about matters A-to-Z, in and out of their city limits.

Mr. Speaker, West Virginia has been blessed by a plethora of long-serving mayors, men and women who have devoted entire careers to caring for their hometowns. These public servants not only know everyone in line at the local grocery store, they also know their parents and grandparents as well as their children and their grandchildren.

To those term-limit zealots out there, I will say these local elected officials know the severest term limit of all—the town election. And yet, election after election, voters repeatedly return so many of these faithful people to public service. Voters know their mayors and know them well, and it says something meaningful when they choose to reelect them over and over again.

Today, Mr. Speaker, I note a celebration happening in my own hometown this week to honor the City of Beckley's longest serving mayor, Emmett S. Pugh III.

Mr. Speaker, in this native son of Beckley, public service roots run deep. His grandfather, A.K. Minter, served as mayor from 1938 to 1959. His other grandfather, E.S. Pugh, served on common council.

Growing up in Beckley, he formed lasting friendships that served as a foundation for his deep sense of caring about people and their problems and his commitment to finding solutions to the community's challenges.

As a Babe Ruth second baseman and shortstop, Emmett helped win the state championship—a first for a Babe Ruth team from Beckley. He grew up with boys who would eventually become business and community leaders: Pat Fragile, the Rosenbaum twins, Palmer Farley, and Fred Lewis, who would become a Supreme Court justice in Florida.

Emmett joined a local band, the Red Barons. He and several friends formed their own "fraternity" at Woodrow Wilson High School, calling themselves the "Dirty Dozen." The Red Barons would eventually appear on Dick Clark's "Cavalcade of Stars". The fortunes of the "Dirty Dozen" are far less clear.

A 1973 University of Alabama graduate and Political Science major with a specialization in State and Local Government, Emmett began his professional career as President of Bowlwick, Inc., serving there for thirteen years. He then became a broker for Wheat First Securities for two years. He served as Councilman-at-Large for the City of Beckley from 1979 until 1988, at which time he became Mayor of the City of Beckley, a position he holds today.

He has served as the Legislative Chairman of the West Virginia Municipal League sixteen