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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. RIBBLE).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
June 10, 2014.

I hereby appoint the Honorable REID J. RIBBLE to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 7, 2014, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 1 hour and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m.

REBUILDING OUR INFRASTRUCTURE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. HIMES) for 5 minutes.

Mr. HIMES. Mr. Speaker, I am moved to rise today because this House, starting yesterday and continuing into today, is considering a complicated bill called the Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act. Mr. Speaker, that is a complicated set of words. This is the bill, of course, in which we fund the Nation's transportation infrastructure.

I rise today, Mr. Speaker, because this bill is not just bad policy, but it is a danger to the safety and economic health of my constituents and to all Americans.

What is it that we are talking about here? We are talking about the money that the Congress appropriates to build and improve our highways, our bridges, and our railways. I wonder who in this House doesn't have bridges or highways or railways in their district? This is the bone, it is the arteries on which we build our economic growth and on which the jobs that we spend so much time talking about are created. Without good highways, without the ability to move people, goods, and services around this country, we are nothing. We will not be serious about creating jobs.

Now, let's take a little tour on how we are doing on our highways, our bridges, and our railways. Just last Friday, I got caught on a Metro-North train in my district because a 100-year-old bridge in Norwalk got stuck in the open position. Thousands of my constituents sitting on trains and in train stations at Grand Central, at Norwalk, and at Stamford were unable to get home.

There have been derailments on this rail line, including some that have been fatal. I live about a mile upstream of a bridge on Interstate 95, the single biggest artery in the Northeast of the United States, that just shy of 20 years ago fell down, killing a bunch of people and creating huge economic havoc.

This is true nationally. The stats are out there. The amount of investment that we need to make in this country to be competitive with the Chinese, with the Europeans, who are spending far more on the bones and sinew of their economies, is huge numbers.

So, what are we doing about it? What are we doing about it right now in this House? Well, the bill I mentioned proposes to spend \$70 billion on transpor-

tation. That sounds like a big number—a lot of zeros. But let's put that into context. A couple of weeks ago, this House decided to spend about \$600 billion on our military, which is fine. It is an incredible military that we have. Add in security and intelligence, and you get a number of about \$700 billion that this House chose to spend on our national security. That is 10 times what we are now choosing to spend on transportation. We are spending 10 times protecting this Nation than we are on actually building this Nation and providing the economic infrastructure that will create the economic growth and jobs that we all say we need—\$70 billion. By the way, that is 1 percent less than we spent last year, and \$20 billion less than the President's request.

Amtrak—now I understand that many of my colleagues don't rely on Amtrak. I rely on it every single week, and, by the way, an awful lot of my colleagues do. I see them on my way down here. Amtrak is proposed to be reduced in funding by 15 percent—half of what the President thinks is necessary in his budget. Who thinks that this is a good idea, Mr. Speaker? Who thinks that it is a good idea in a country where we are supposedly serious about creating jobs to underinvest in the artery, the bone, and the sinew that allows us to grow jobs in this country? That is not a good idea. And, yet, we are fending off amendments to cut investment even more in our transportation infrastructure.

Are there people in this country who don't sit in traffic wasting time that they could be spending with their family, taking away their focus on their businesses that they would like to grow? There aren't many of them, and yet this House chooses to reduce the investment in the country that we supposedly hold dear.

I am tired of it, Mr. Speaker. I am tired of my constituents having their

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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lives damaged, having their safety put at risk, and having their businesses jeopardized because we have not invested enough in our infrastructure. Is there a State out there, by the way, that has an extra billion or two dollars lying around? Because some of my colleagues think that maybe the States should be investing. But I am curious. Is there a State out there that has an extra \$5 billion in their budget to step in where the Federal Government should be active? I don't think so. I don't hear that. And yet this House is about to reduce the spending on transportation.

Mr. Speaker, this cannot stand.

GE EXPANSION IN WEST JEFFERSON

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX) for 5 minutes.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, last week, it was my great pleasure to participate in a groundbreaking at a plant expansion at the GE manufacturing facility in West Jefferson, North Carolina. The expansion will allow GE to produce more of the company's incredibly popular LEAP engine, which will power next-generation aircraft from around the globe. The 80,000-square-foot factory expansion will provide for additional machining capacity and represents a \$65 million investment by GE in West Jefferson.

The LEAP jet engine has proven to be incredibly popular, with commitments or orders for more than 6,000 LEAP engines to date. This is especially remarkable because the LEAP does not enter service until 2016. Once it does enter service, it will power planes such as the Boeing 737 MAX and the Airbus A320neo.

GE is familiar with the fact that high quality workers can be found in North Carolina, since the company already has more than 1,300 employees at locations in West Jefferson, Durham, Wilmington, and Asheville. The current expansion is expected to add 105 new jobs over the next 2½ years.

I am exceptionally pleased that GE is partnering with Wilkes Community College to give local workers the skills needed to compete for the new jobs this expansion will bring to West Jefferson. This innovative worker education program will allow current and prospective employees to learn in a hands-on environment with state-of-the-art machinery.

Mr. Speaker, this is just the type of program that we need to close the skills gap and give hardworking Americans the opportunity to compete for the 4 million jobs that are available now.

This expansion will demonstrate, yet again, that American manufacturing and American workers can compete in the global economy. There is no more fulfilling aspect of our jobs here than to be invited to be present for the an-

nouncement of more jobs in our districts. Everyone in the area is excited for the community of West Jefferson, and I look forward to a very successful future for the innovative education partnership between GE and Wilkes Community College. Thanks to GE for making this investment, and thanks to the employees at GE West Jefferson for your great effort and commitment to excellence.

DR. PEPPER BOTTLING COMPANY

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, last week, I was energized and inspired by the opportunity to tour the Dr. Pepper Bottling Company in West Jefferson, North Carolina. This plant has been recognized for the high quality of its products and was a recipient of the 2013 Caleb Bradham President's Award.

This award is named after North Carolina native and Pepsi founder, Caleb Bradham. This year, only 19 plants across the country received the award out of hundreds of bottlers across this country. According to The Jefferson Post:

The company received the award for the production of its 12-ounce glass bottle sodas, which are bottled in downtown West Jefferson. West Jefferson Dr. Pepper glass bottle products are wildly popular among soda enthusiasts.

The Dr. Pepper Bottling Company has been making drinks in West Jefferson since 1940, when it was founded by H.R. Vannoy. Among the employees are three generations of the Vannoy family, whose patriarch began the company. I wish the company and all of its employees many more years of success.

SERGEANT LUKE PORTER—OLD GUARD COMMISSIONING

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. THOMPSON) for 5 minutes.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and congratulate Sergeant Luke Porter of State College, Pennsylvania, serving within the United States Army's 4th Battalion, 3rd Infantry Regiment—better known as The Old Guard.

On June 9, Sergeant Porter was formally inducted into the ultra-selective unit which stands guard as a Sentinel for the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. Since 1958, only 622 other individuals have been selected to share in Sergeant Porter's distinct honor and responsibility. He now will become number 623.

The Sentinels at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier stand guard over their fallen brothers-in-arms 365 days a year in squelching heat, rain, hurricanes, and blizzards.

Sergeant Porter could not have made it this far in his military services without the life lessons and guidance of his parents and family, who were present during the ceremony, and during his first changing of the guard.

Congratulations, Sergeant Porter, on this outstanding distinction. You have joined a highly motivated regiment

that proudly honors all American servicemembers who are "known but to God." May you remain resolute in your convictions and serve as an example for the countless others selflessly serving in our Armed Forces.

70TH COMMEMORATION OF D-DAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE) for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, this past weekend, I had the privilege of joining the President of the United States in the official delegation to the 70th commemoration of D-Day.

It was not a normal experience of an international codel, the opportunity to interact with our colleagues and allies in Europe, but it was a testament and a testimony to the continuing strength, determination, and value of the United States of America. It was a moving experience. It was an experience based in reality.

We listened to the recounting of the deliberations of General Montgomery, General Eisenhower, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, Winston Churchill, and many others. We listened to the stories of young men, many of whom signed up at the age of 15 or 16, 17, wanting to serve their country, not knowing where they would go, now in their late 80s and early 90s, and some would say the sweetest men that you had ever seen, showing pictures, telling stories, and shedding a tear about the comrades that were left on Omaha Beach or Sword Beach, soldiers that didn't speak the same language but understood the words of liberation and freedom.

I would only say that I hope this challenges this body called the House of Representatives, that they didn't wear the armor of Republicans or Green Party or Tea Party or Independent Party or Democratic Party; they wore the armor of an American.

What wonderful words of General Eisenhower, who said that he needed the unity, the strength of all, or the sadness of those who ploughed their way onto the beach, seasick and nauseous as they were, losing tons of equipment, and, unfortunately, at times coming and falling over bodies of bleeding soldiers, losing some 10,000 in the first day.

Where is the America of that time, prepared to take up comprehensive immigration reform or prepared to take up serious gun regulations to stop this unending violence in America, even the shooting of two law enforcement officers? What has America come to?

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Where is its greatness? Where is the reality that we are the generations that have inherited those young men's lives—and young women's, the Rosie Riveters—who left their homes, sacrificing? Where is the placement of the Voting Rights Act reauthorization, which is a bipartisan bill? Why haven't we passed that to show that liberty is real in the United States of America?