

can be applied as a successful means of deterring violence.

The National Nonviolence Week resolution is closely related to my other bills, the SAFETY through Nonviolence Act, the Gandhi-King Scholarly Exchange Initiative Act, and the National Parents Corps Act, which I plan to reintroduce soon. Combined, these are legislative solutions to break the cycle of violence, bullying, and hate in our country by addressing the root causes.

During National Nonviolence Week, Americans should organize and participate in programs and activities that promote awareness and prevention of violence. It is an opportunity, for people of all ages and backgrounds in every corner of our nation, to pause and take a long look inward and reflect on how we all can be vessels of peace in our actions, thoughts, and words.

Mr. Speaker, I hope all of my colleagues will join me in cosponsoring and passing this very simple, common-sense resolution of establishing a National Nonviolence Week. Thank you.

RECOGNIZING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF MIKAEL AUDEBERT

HON. ALAN GRAYSON

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 12, 2014

Mr. GRAYSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) Pride Month, to recognize Mikael Audebert. Born in France, Mikael moved to the U.S. at age 18 and has lived in Orlando since 2000.

Mikael has been with Metropolitan Business Association of Orlando (MBA Orlando) since 2008. MBA Orlando, Central Florida's LGBT Chamber of Commerce, is the largest of its kind in the Southeast and a fast-growing entity in Central Florida. Mikael started as Technology Director for the organization and quickly rose to the position of Vice President. In 2012, he became President of MBA Orlando, as well as Executive Director of Come Out With Pride and Converge Orlando, two of MBA Orlando's sister organizations.

Since taking over as President, Mikael has initiated and overseen a vast expansion of MBA Orlando, including a move to larger offices; the launch of a printed directory; the development of a small business initiative program; a marketing campaign to increase the visibility of LGBT businesses; and the creation of a small business start up grant program in partnership with the federal government and the City of Orlando.

In 2008 Mikael joined Come Out With Pride as Marketing Director and quickly rose to become Executive Producer of Development before becoming the organizations' first Executive Director in 2010.

Mikael is also a co-founder of Converge Orlando, a non-profit organization with the mission to develop and expand LGBT tourism to Orlando. Converge Orlando partnered with the Central Florida Sports Commission to bid on bringing the 2018 Gay Games to Orlando. Converge Orlando is also launching the very first Family Outfest event in Orlando, aimed at bringing LGBT and allies families closer together. In addition, the organization is hosting

several LGBT conventions in Orlando and continuing to organize media trips which have generated articles in national LGBT and Brazilian magazines. Converge also recently launched the first LGBT Travel Guide with Visit Orlando, getting Central Florida ready for this emerging market.

In addition to his lifelong passion for travel, Mikael is also an avid event planner and organizes Orlando's annual LGBT Pride event, the largest in Florida. Mikael was named one of the "40 Under 40" in 2013 by the Orlando Business Journal. The same year, he was named one of the most influential men by the same paper and "Most Remarkable Person" of the year by the Watermark.

Mikael was born in France and moved to the U.S. at age 18. He has lived in Orlando since 2000.

THE INTRODUCTION OF THE "GENERATING RENEWAL, OPPORTUNITY, AND WORK WITH ACCELERATED MOBILITY, EFFICIENCY, AND REBUILDING OF INFRASTRUCTURE AND COMMUNITIES THROUGHOUT AMERICA ACT"

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 12, 2014

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to join Congressman PETRI in introducing, on June 11, 2014, the Administration's \$302 billion, four-year surface transportation authorization proposal—the "Generating Renewal, Opportunity, and Work with Accelerated Mobility, Efficiency, and Rebuilding of Infrastructure and Communities throughout America Act" (GROW AMERICA Act). With the goal of trying to get greater focus on surface transportation reauthorization before the Highway Trust Fund becomes insolvent, I was in touch with Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx about introducing the Administration's bill. He agreed, and, subsequently Chairman TOM PETRI, as a courtesy, agreed to introduce the bill at the request of the Administration.

Particularly considering that the funding provided in the current authorization, MAP-21, based on the Highway Trust Fund plus an additional \$18 billion from general revenue, has proven unable to get states through the two-year duration of the bill, I believe Congress must act soon on a fully funded six-year reauthorization. Such a bill would provide the funding and the certainty necessary to give the nation a chance to reduce the backlog of needed transportation infrastructure work waiting to be done. This Administration's four-year bill is a timely contribution as Congress works towards passage of a long-term surface transportation authorization, and should provide guidance and ideas as we develop legislation to set the future course of these vital programs.

Mr. Speaker, federal investments in transportation and infrastructure contribute much more to our economy than they cost the federal government, as they improve the nation's mobility and economic competitiveness and create good-paying jobs. Unfortunately, we have not been providing the investment levels necessary to keep pace with the growing de-

mands on the nation's surface transportation network. The GROW AMERICA Act recognizes that we have fallen behind, and calls for increasing investments in modernizing the nation's roads, bridges, railways, and transit systems. We cannot address our infrastructure deficit by just continuing to provide baseline levels of funding.

Specifically, the GROW AMERICA Act provides:

\$199.2 billion over fiscal year 2015—fiscal year 2018 for highways, compared to \$40.9 billion authorized in fiscal year 2014;

an increase of 70 percent over current investment levels in transit, by providing more than \$72 billion over four years and dramatically increasing investment in all modes of transit, including buses;

more than \$19 billion in freight and passenger rail investments, including \$9.5 billion over four years for Amtrak; and \$9.5 billion to states for investment in high-speed and intercity passenger rail and to eliminate congestion on shared-use track; and

\$5 billion over four years for the TIGER discretionary program.

In addition to these critical investments in the nation's intermodal surface transportation network, the GROW AMERICA Act also includes a number of important policy provisions that ensure that surface transportation investments create good-paying American jobs.

Mr. Speaker, the GROW AMERICA Act proposes to strengthen Buy America by closing a major loophole in the application of Buy America requirements for public transportation rolling stock by requiring that transit rolling stock must consist of 100 percent domestic content by 2019. It also applies Buy America to all Federal Railroad Administration grant programs and the Railroad Infrastructure Financing program. These provisions will spur job creation in the United States and foster domestic manufacturing, and should be included in the next surface transportation authorization legislation.

The GROW AMERICA Act also protects truck and bus drivers by changing worker wage and hour laws to ensure that these drivers are compensated at no less than the federal minimum wage for hours spent on duty but not driving.

The proposal also provides \$245 million over four years for workforce development to support and enhance the size, diversity, and skills of our nation's construction and surface transportation workforce.

There are aspects of the bill that may give some of my colleagues pause. For example, eliminating the prohibition on tolling of existing free interstate highways for reconstruction of an existing facility and further streamlining environmental reviews will be subject to significant debate as Congress begins developing its legislation. But, this bill is an important first step in our efforts to craft a bill to move our nation into the 21st century.

I again thank Congressman PETRI for his courtesy in introducing this proposal. I look forward to working closely with him and Republicans and Democrats on the Subcommittee on Highways and Transit as we begin to develop new surface transportation authorization legislation.