also affirms the sense of the Congress that by 2024, the gas tax should be repealed and replaced with a more sustainable funding source. My second piece of legislation, the Road Usage Charge Pilot Program Act, provides research funding for states to explore a transition away from the gas tax to a system based on vehicle miles travelled (VMT). Such a Road Usage Charge system would be more fair, a more accurate reflection of road use, and more sustainable for the long term, as fuel efficiency increases and hybrid and electric vehicles rise in popularity. Questions remain about how best to implement such a system, collect revenue, and address privacy concerns. Congress should encourage states to answer these questions through pilot projects. This legislation, instead of tying America's transportation system to the past, paves the way for the future.

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.

RECOGNIZING MAJOR KRISTEN CLARK CASTONGUAY

HON. MICHAEL G. FITZPATRICK

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 3, 2015

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, today I offer congratulations to Major Kristen Clark Castonguay on her recent promotion as an officer in the United States Air Force. A graduate of Neshaminy High School in Langhorne, Bucks County, and Syracuse University, New York, Major Castonguay also holds a master's degree in aerospace engineering from Pennsylvania State University. Kristen's father, David Clark, and her uncle, Terry Clark, an Air Force veteran, inspired her to explore her interest in rockets and space exploration. Major Castonguay believes she was called to serve for the greater good of the country and wanted to be a part of something bigger than herself. She was commissioned as an Air Force officer in 2004 and subsequently served on active duty in various Air Force bases in space propulsion and engineering supervisory positions. Major Castonguay currently teaches Rocket Propulsion and Space System Lab in the aerospace engineering department of the United States Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland. I gratefully acknowledge Major Kristen Clark Castonguay's dedication and many contributions to our country. She has set an example of diligence and duty and service for others to follow. Once again, I am pleased to offer my congratulations on her outstanding achievements and wish her continued success.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JOSEPH CROWLEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 3, 2015

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, on January 28, 2015 I missed recorded votes #49–50 as I was returning from the presidential delegation to India to support this important partnership between our two countries.

I would like to reflect how I would have voted if I were here.

On Roll Call #49 I would have voted yes

On Roll Call #50 I would have voted no

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. PETER J. ROSKAM

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 3, 2015

Mr. ROSKAM. Mr. Speaker, on roll call no. 51 I had an unavoidable conflict. Had I been present, I would have voted aye.

HOUSTON, TEXAS RECOGNIZES INAUGURAL MISSING PERSONS DAY

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 3, 2015

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, today, February 3, 2015, we recognize Missing Persons Day in Houston, Texas.

There are few situations harder than when a family member or friend disappears.

We cannot forget each and every person missing from our community.

And help families, law enforcement, and community organizations raise awareness.

Today, we keep the hope alive that young people like Ali Lowitzer will return home.

Today is Ali's 21st birthday.

She went missing almost 5 years ago in April 2010 nearby her home in Spring, Texas.

She got off the bus after school and headed to work.

And she hasn't been heard from since.

Her family will not stop until she is found.

We join them in staying vigilant.

Citizens should report sightings and suspicious activity to law enforcement, Crime Stoppers or the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children.

All of these groups are partners in solving crimes.

One never knows when a report will end in a missing person returning to their family.

Ali's mother, Jo Ann, and her family are to be commended for raising the profile on this serious issue in Houston and providing support to other families.

We pray that Ali's mother, father, and brother and all those whose loved ones are missing will soon be reunited as a complete family.

And that's just the way it is.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ANNA G. ESHOO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 3, 2015

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, I was not present during roll call vote numbers 51, 52, and 53 on February 2, 2015, due to a flight cancellation.

I would like to reflect how I would have voted:

On roll call vote no. 51 I would have voted YES.

On roll call vote no. 52 I would have voted YES.

On roll call vote no. 53 I would have voted YES.

INTRODUCTION OF THE VETERANS EQUAL ACCESS ACT

HON. EARL BLUMENAUER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 3, 2015

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, today, I am introducing the bipartisan Veterans Equal Access Act along with my colleagues DANA ROHRABACHER, WALTER JONES, JUSTIN AMASH, TOM REED, RICHARD HANNA, DINA TITUS, SAM FARR and JARED POLIS, which will allow Veterans Health Administration physicians to recommend medical marijuana to their patients in states where it is legal.

Twenty-three states and the District of Columbia have passed laws that provide for legal access to medical marijuana. As a result, well over one million patients across the country, including many veterans, now use medical marijuana at the recommendation of their physician to treat conditions ranging from seizures, glaucoma, anxiety, chronic pain, and nausea.

There are also nine states and the District of Columbia that now allow physicians to recommend medical marijuana for the symptoms of Post-Traumatic Stress (PTS), due to a growing body of anecdotal evidence suggesting that marijuana offers relief when nothing else has.

While outdated federal barriers often prevent the research necessary to develop marijuana into an FDA approved drug, states have heard from their citizens, including veterans suffering from PTS, that marijuana is helping them now, and have adjusted their laws.

Despite this growing state availability of medical marijuana, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) prohibits VA medical providers from completing forms brought by their patients seeking recommendations or opinions regarding participation in a state marijuana program.

The Veterans Equal Access Act would require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to authorize physicians and other health care workers employed by the VA to provide recommendations and opinions regarding the participation of a veteran in a state medical marijuana program. This includes authorizing them to fill out any forms involved in the process of recommending medical marijuana.

Veterans should not be forced outside of the VA system to seek a treatment that is legal in their state. VA physicians should not be denied the ability to offer a recommendation they think may meet the needs of their patient. I hope my colleagues will join me in supporting this effort.