

\$1.5 billion below last year's level. The overall appropriations levels for all domestic discretionary programs and priorities is lower than at any point in more than a decade. That is the root cause of the problem, and until the reckless budget sequester is lifted, the priorities that Americans care about will not get the support they need. We must end sequestration now.

But the specific cuts in this bill are also a concern. H.R. 2577 imposes devastating cuts on housing priorities. It would impose a more than 10 percent cut in public housing management. It would also significantly underfund supportive housing for seniors, with that funding below last year's level and almost 10 percent below the President's request. Those cuts will have devastating impacts on Americans struggling to make ends meet.

As has been highlighted by many of my colleagues, this bill also fails to make rail infrastructure, high speed rail, and positive train control a priority. Experts say that positive train control could have prevented the tragic Amtrak train derailment north of Philadelphia, but Congress continues to shirk its obligation to adequately support it. That failure is inexcusable.

Finally, H.R. 2577 does not make the investment in auto safety oversight that the last year has proven we need. 2014 was the year

of the recall, almost doubling the previous record. We're on pace to break the record again this year. Yet, this bill funds the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration—the agency responsible for monitoring and improving auto safety—just 1 percent above last year's level. That is less than inflation. While I supported the amendment my colleague, Rep. MICHAEL BURGESS, successfully added to increase NHTSA funding by \$4 million, that is just a drop in the bucket in terms of what is needed. It is also unfortunate that this bill cuts the Office of the Secretary of Transportation—4 percent below last year's level and more than 10 percent below the President's request—in order to slightly increase NHTSA funding. We need to consider legislation like H.R. 1811, the Vehicle Safety Improvement Act, which would more than double NHTSA funding for its important work through a new \$3 fee on new vehicles. We need to ramp up resources, authority, and other support for NHTSA in order to significantly improve auto safety and save lives. I will continue to work with Mr. BURGESS and others to get that done.

These are just a handful of the overwhelming number of reasons I oppose H.R. 2577. I am glad that the President has issued a veto threat on the bill, and I will continue to work to ensure that it is never enacted.

NEEDVILLE HIGH SCHOOL STATE
SOFTBALL

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 9, 2015

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Needville High School softball team for completing their season as Class 4A Texas State Runners Up.

After a history-making season, the Lady Blue Jays finished strong with a 33–8 record. They were led on and off the field by two outstanding young pitchers, Victoria Moreno and Micayla Orsak, who received great encouragement from Coach Amber Schmidt. The Lady Blue Jays demonstrated immense dedication to the sport and remained motivated throughout the championship game. They fought hard until the very end! We are extremely proud of the entire Needville High School softball team and coaching staff.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to the entire Lady Blue Jays softball team on an incredible season. We look forward to seeing everything this team accomplishes.