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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. FLEISCHMANN).

### DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,  
October 22, 2015.

I hereby appoint the Honorable CHARLES J. FLEISCHMANN 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 6, 2015, 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.

### TRANSPORTATION REAUTHORIZATION

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, today, the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee will consider a surface transportation reauthorization. Unfortunately, calling it a "reauthorization" doesn't make it so.

This legislation calls for a 6-year period of reauthorization and hopes to be funded for 3 years, but it doesn't actually provide a single dime of revenue

from the highway trust fund. It is simply an empty shell.

It really doesn't have to be this hard. There is a single solution that is supported by everyone outside of Capitol Hill, one that has been employed by six red Republican States already this year and championed by Ronald Reagan when he was President: raise the gas tax. Our problems are that we are trying to fund 2015 infrastructure with 1993 dollars—the last time we raised the Federal gas tax.

I have a bill that will accomplish this fact. H.R. 680 provides that assurance and certainty by phasing in a gas tax increase over 3 years. It will permit us to fully fund a 6-year reauthorization for the first time since 1998 without resorting to gimmicks. It is cosponsored by over three dozen House Members, but, more importantly, it enjoys the broadest base of support for any major piece of legislation before Congress.

Is there any other bill of any significance that is endorsed by the U.S. Chamber and the AFL-CIO, countless business and trade associations, as well as individual unions, the American Trucking Association, representing that industry, and auto users, represented by AAA?

The answer is "no."

The coalition includes bicyclists, engineers, local government, transit agencies—virtually anyone who builds, maintains, or depends upon our transportation system.

For all the rhetoric about "strengthening the economy," this will be the one proven way of putting several million people to work at family-wage jobs while it reduces the deficit and strengthens our communities from coast to coast. Every State, every metropolitan area, every rural region of America would benefit both by the transportation improvements as well as the economic impact this work will create.

This has been recognized by independent analysts, editorials in major

newspapers, and in small newspapers all across the country. There really is no controversy.

Indeed, in the over two dozen States that have raised transportation revenue since 2012, the legislators who voted for more transportation revenue got reelected by a higher percentage than the legislators who voted against it. It is broadly supported, not politically controversial, and is desperately needed.

I am glad my colleagues were able to reach a compromise on the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee and put forward some interesting ideas. It gives a hint of what could happen if we had a real funding source, which we don't; and the bill being marked up raises more questions, therefore, than it answers. Even if the House were to embrace it unanimously, we would still be where we were 3 months ago, 6 months ago, and many times before that.

We are facing another short-term extension—this will be the 35th—and are providing zero assurance or long-term certainty to the many who rely on our transportation system. No country became great building its infrastructure 8 months at a time.

We can have markups and pass a reauthorization shell on the floor of the House; but until we embrace H.R. 680 and raise the gas tax, finding revenue that is sustainable, dedicated, and big enough to do the job, we are still going to be spinning our wheels; and America will be stuck.

### ASHLEY MITCHELL

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

Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to highlight the accomplishments of a truly remarkable lady in my district.

□ 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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