

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 22,
SURFACE TRANSPORTATION RE-
AUTHORIZATION AND REFORM
ACT OF 2015

SPEECH OF

HON. JOHN C. CARNEY, JR.

OF DELAWARE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 3, 2015

Mr. CARNEY. Mr. Speaker, I submit this statement regarding House passage of Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act. With many reservations and a sense of frustration, I will vote for this bill. I believe in the bill's core goals—investing in our infrastructure and providing stability to our transportation system. The legislation raises funding levels to meet the needs of our crumbling roads and bridges and avoids the short-term patches that have plagued the bill for years. I'm also glad it's the result of a bipartisan effort, and supports infrastructure projects and programs like the High Density Transit Program and the Export-Import Bank.

That said, once again, Congress missed an opportunity. We had the chance to responsibly and sustainably fund our transportation system with real revenue sources. Instead, we cobbled together one-time funding sources that will put us right back where we are today when the bill expires: in the midst of a funding shortfall and a crisis. I had long advocated for funding our transportation bill by collecting taxes on corporate profits trapped overseas. This would be a step towards fixing our broken tax system and would discourage American companies from moving overseas. Doing so also would have provided a significant source of funding for the bill, and created the momentum to reform our international tax code. Instead, our tax code is still broken, and we no longer have the leverage of a must-pass transportation bill to fix it.

Passage of this bill means we're better off than we were before. States and local transportation agencies have the certainty they need to map out the infrastructure improvement projects our nation sorely needs. And our public transit system will be strengthened. I remain committed to finding a more responsible way to fund these programs and to fixing our tax system.

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SPEECH OF

HON. EARL BLUMENAUER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 3, 2015

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, the passage of H.R. 22, Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act, is a significant accomplishment. It ends the embarrassing string of 37 short-term extensions. It provides five years of certainty with modest, but important, increased spending levels. There are provisions that deal with safety, innovation, and integrating passenger rail into overall surface transportation, among many other notable items.

I am pleased that a number of provisions that I have authored and championed have

found their way into the final version of this legislation. One of the unheralded provisions potentially has the most significant, far-reaching consequences—the expansion of work on an alternative user-fee to replace the gas tax. This reflects legislation I have introduced that builds upon the Oregon pilot project on road user charges. There is also a specific title dealing with innovation. The next five years will see unparalleled changes in transportation practices and technology that can have a transformational effect on our way of life, and this bill embraces this.

Unfortunately, Congress continues to refuse to address a Highway Trust Fund that is inadequate and losing purchasing power by the month. Refusing to increase the gas tax for 22 years or to have any other source of revenue has complicated passage of a long-term bill. Instead, the collection of budget gimmicks paying for the legislation are, in many cases, questionable. For example, using private bill collectors to hound low-income taxpayers who run into financial difficulty is a money loser, as well as ineffective and unpopular. This is one of many ways the bill is paid for, basically to disguise the use of the Treasury's general fund instead of the traditional user fee model.

I am hopeful that we can use the next five years to build upon the positive framework of the legislation and for Congress to accept the overwhelming consensus of the people who build, maintain, and use our surface transportation system. They want to increase user fees to adequately fund transportation, and so should we as well.

I will vote for this bill because the positive policy features are compelling and because it gives us an opportunity to use this five-year period of stability to get it right. I will spare no effort to do so, and I hope I'm joined by my colleagues so that the next reauthorization truly enables us to rebuild and renew America, put millions of Americans to work at family wage jobs, and strengthen communities from coast to coast.

CEDAR CLIFF UNITED METHODIST
CHURCH

HON. BILL PASCRELL, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 7, 2015

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, I would like to call to your attention the achievements of an outstanding faith community, the Cedar Cliff United Methodist Church (UMC), which celebrated their ministry's 125th Anniversary of successful service to the community of Haledon on Sunday, December 6, 2015.

Since December 7, 1890, when it first opened its doors, the church has stood in its current location, serving as a house of worship in the town of Haledon, on 18 Zabriskie Street. The church has its own unique piece of history, through their bell which was donated by U.S. Vice President Barret A. Hobart. Many members of the church have also served in the military since World War I.

Cedar Cliff UMC is located in a neighborhood that is ethnically diverse and constantly changing. It has one traditional Sunday morning worship service. Current ministries within the church include the prayer shawl ministry, Bible study, Monday night yoga classes, a

food pantry and joint fellowship events with a partner church that shares its facilities. The church has also been home to many Boys & Girls Scout troops throughout the years.

The church has been a place where many babies have been baptized, a place where couples get married, and also a place where family members have laid their loved ones to rest in their sanctuary. But most importantly, many lives have been changed by the people that have called Cedar Cliff UMC home since 1890. The ministry has been a major part of the Haledon community and continues to serve all. The Church members and organizers have worked passionately to build many bridges between different groups within the faith community.

The Cedar Cliff UMC has had many leaders throughout its years. Today, it is led by Reverend Pamela Grant James, who has inspired many to follow the path of faith and kindness. Reverend James has helped shape our society and is deserving of every bit of recognition for her selfless actions.

It gives me pride to recognize the excellence of the Cedar Cliff UMC and I thank them for servicing the residents of Haledon. I am grateful to represent the Church and its congregation within the 9th Congressional District of New Jersey.

The job of a United States Congressman involves much that is rewarding, yet nothing compares to recognizing and commemorating the achievements of faith communities such as the Cedar Cliff UMC.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you join our colleagues, and the Cedar Cliff UMC in celebrating their 125th Anniversary and recognizing their leadership, dedication and loyalty to serving the community.

RECOGNIZING PETER H. CRESSY,
EDD.

HON. TODD C. YOUNG

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 7, 2015

Mr. YOUNG of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize and commend Dr. Peter H. Cressy, Ed.D., the President and CEO of the Distilled Spirits Council of the United States on his remarkable career and wish him well as he is set to retire from this position in January.

Dr. Cressy has led an impressive career that includes 28 years of service to our nation in the United States Navy which concluded with his retirement as a Rear Admiral. His leadership roles continued with some of the nation's most prestigious academic institutions, and in government service roles where he held senior positions at the State Department, on Capitol Hill, and the Pentagon.

Dr. Cressy's most recent leadership role at the Distilled Spirits Council of the United States has led to a stronger, more responsible, and transparent industry. Under his leadership the distilled spirits industry has grown both domestically and internationally all while placing an emphasis on and commitment to responsible and transparent practices. This commitment is evident in the industry's advertising and marketing Code of Responsible Practices which has been referenced as a model of responsible industry self-regulation as well as the Council's efforts to work with retailers and wholesalers, universities, and