minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DOLD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the men and women of the Lake County Forest Preserve District and their 100-year vision for protecting Lake County's unique and precious environment.

Led by Executive Director Ty Kovach, they have assembled a bold, 100-year vision for how to preserve our wildlife and this natural resource, not just for us today, but for our children and our children's children.

Mr. Speaker, the Lake County Forest Preserve District wants to ensure future generations can reap the benefits from a healthy and resilient environment and understand that the only way to ensure a better future is to make changes today. Their education and leadership on conservation issues will go a long way to protecting this incredible resource.

Mr. Speaker, I thank them for their efforts and humbly stand by their side to continue to champion the importance of protecting our environment.

And that is just the way it is.

EXTEND FLORIDA'S GULF COAST OIL DRILLING BAN TO YEAR 2027

(Ms. GRAHAM asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. GRAHAM. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to speak in support of new legislation I am cosponsoring with my friend Congressman DAVID JOLLY to extend Florida's Gulf Coast oil drilling ban to the year 2027.

The drilling ban currently extends 125 miles off much of Florida's Gulf Coast and as far as 235 miles in some areas, but it is set to expire in 2022. There are some in the Senate trying to reduce the ban to just 50 miles as soon as next year.

This legislation reaffirms our commitment to protecting Florida's precious Gulf Coast beaches and will protect the environment, our economy, and military operations in the Gulf.

An oil spill like Deepwater Horizon just 50 miles off of northwest Florida's beaches would be devastating for our region. We can't allow that to happen and should pass this legislation to extend the drilling ban and protect Florida's Gulf Coast beaches.

RECOGNIZING PENN STATE CREAMERY ON 150 YEARS

(Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, House Majority Leader KEVIN MCCARTHY calls it ''some of the best ice cream I have had outside of my hometown of Bakersfield.''

The majority leader, of course, is referring to the ice cream produced at Penn State University's Berkey Creamery. I am proud to rise today in recognition of the creamery's 150th anniversary.

The creamery, located in the Rodney A. Erickson Food Science Building on Penn State University's main campus, was first established in 1865.

Penn State is home to the largest university creamery in the United States, using more than 4.5 million pounds of milk each year, supporting Pennsylvania's robust dairy industry.

To help celebrate their 150th anniversary, the creamery has launched a social media contest, which allows fans to select the special sesquicentennial flavor. Voters have a few days left to choose between birthday cake, strawberry cheesecake, or red velvet.

Mr. Speaker, as a proud graduate of Penn State University, I congratulate the Berkey Creamery on 150 years of creating countless memories, and especially the hard-working student employees and the 23 full-time employees that make the operations such a great success.

RECOGNIZING TAMPA BAY ESTUARY PROGRAM

(Mr. JOLLY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. JOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Tampa Bay Estuary Program and the great work they have done since their founding in 1991.

The Tampa Bay Estuary contains one of the most vibrant and productive ecosystems along the Gulf Coast because the unique mix of saltwater from the Gulf and freshwater from rivers and uplands have created abundant nurseries for juvenile fish and other sea life. More than 70 percent of all fish, shellfish, and crustaceans spend some critical stage of their development in these near-shore waters protected from larger predators that swim the open sea.

Very importantly, scientists at the Southwest Florida Water Management District have found that Tampa Bay now supports over 40,000 acres of sea grass beds. Tampa Bay is Florida's largest open water estuary. Due to the great work of the program, Tampa Bay's water quality is now as good as it was in 1950.

I want to thank the leadership of Tampa Bay's estuary program, particularly Executive Director Holly Greening, for her vision not only for the estuary program, but for the entire Tampa Bay community.

Tampa Bay is coming back to life, again assuming its position as the shimmering economic and environmental centerpiece of the vibrant southwest Florida region.

TRIBUTE TO CHUCK JOHNSON

(Mr. ZINKE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. ZINKE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Chuck Johnson, a man who kept me and countless other public servants in Montana honest and accountable as the capitol bureau chief and longtime political reporter.

Chuck's 43-year journalism career began in 1977. In the decades since, Chuck has been the primary educator of government, politics, and ethics for generations of Montanans.

I had the pleasure of getting to know Chuck as a State senator and had the distinct pleasure of traveling with him across Montana. He is a straight shooter and a true professional.

In the era of online and 24-hour news outlets that push agendas and competition for cliques, Chuck's modus operandi was to tell the truth, tell the facts, and let the people of Montana decide. I urge future journalists to study his work and learn what they can from this true Montana professional.

I wish Chuck fair winds and following seas in his retirement. Bravo Zulu.

TRANSPORTATION, HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2016

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HULTGREN). Pursuant to House Resolution 287 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the further consideration of the bill, H.R. 2577.

Will the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) kindly take the chair.

□ 0912

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the further consideration of the bill (H.R. 2577) making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes, with Mr. POE of Texas (Acting Chair) in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The Acting CHAIR. When the Committee of the Whole rose earlier today, an amendment offered by the gentleman from Florida (Mr. GRAYSON) had been disposed of, and the bill had been read through page 156, line 15.

AMENDMENT NO. 7 OFFERED BY MRS. BLACKBURN

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. ____. Each amount made available by this Act is hereby reduced by 1 percent.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 287, the gentlewoman from Tennessee and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Tennessee.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Chairman, I am certain it comes as no surprise to anyone in this body that, as we go through this appropriations season, I come back to the floor working to make another cut to get our spending levels down. The bill we have before us, the T-HUD approps, is a $55.3 billion bill. That is discretionary funding.

□ 0915

Now, credit should go to the subcommittee chairmen and to those who have worked on this to get the spending levels down because this is $9.7 billion below the President's request. That is really quite remarkable. And my amendment, which is another 1 percent reduction—a penny out of a dollar—would save our taxpayers $598 million and would reduce the 2006 outlays by $369 million.

Now, Mr. Chairman, when you look at budget authority and you look at the outlays, those are significant numbers. They are significant also, Mr. Chairman, when you look at the debt. We are $18.3 trillion in debt; and, quite frankly, I think that that is too much debt for us to ask our children and grandchildren to handle.

I think it is imperative that we, as stewards of the taxpayers' money, put these issues on the table and say, ''Yes, there are great things we would like to do,'' ''Yes, there are projects that would be wonderful,'' but we have to be responsible to the taxpayers.

This is not Federal money. It doesn't just grow on trees. What we have to realize is that it all comes from taxpayers. They are overtaxed. They feel the Federal Government is overspent, and they want to see the spending brought under control. I agree with them. That is why I bring this amendment forward.

Mr. Chairman, I think, also, we have to look at the fact that our economic security, our fiscal security, and our national security are all closely linked. Because of that, Admiral Mullen said that the greatest threat to our Nation's security is our Nation's debt. We have to get serious about reducing this debt.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Florida is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Mr. Chairman, the bill that is in front of us is a responsible bill that adheres to the budget caps set by law and passed by this body. We set priorities in this bill, and we made targeted cuts to overhead, salaries, expenses, and also duplicative programs, Mr. Chairman. Many programs are also held at last year's level or below. Again, we made some tough decisions.

The problem is, when you are doing, frankly, an across-the-board cut with this amendment, it would have some, frankly—and I know it is well intentioned—it would have some harmful effects on the priorities set by the Members of this House. Again, we have cut programs, but based on hearings, on meetings, on discussions, and on careful reviews of, again, the budget justifications and also the audits.

This amendment, and I know it is very well intentioned, would hit, for example, air traffic control operations and cause unnecessary flight delays. It could hurt our most vulnerable populations by, for example, affecting assistance to over 50,000 residents, including elderly and disabled populations.

Now, I am not telling you that there are not areas that can be reduced. We have done that. As a matter of fact, we have been in debate, and we have heard a lot of debate about some people saying that we have done too much of that. But we have done so after hours and hours of deliberations, of talking, of conversations, of study, and of hearings. So, again, I know it is a well-intended amendment, and I am a huge admirer of the sponsor of this amendment, but I have to respectfully urge a ''no'' vote precisely because of the time we have spent to make the right reductions as opposed to across-the-board reductions.

Mr. Chairman, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. PRICE), the ranking member of the subcommittee.

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. Mr. Chairman, I thank the chairman of our subcommittee for yielding, and I want to join him in opposing this amendment.

This is an indiscriminate amendment. It cuts programs in transportation and housing without any thought as to their relative merits. It is the opposite of intelligent appropriating.

For example, this would result in fewer air traffic controllers, fewer pipeline safety inspectors, and the eviction—literally, the eviction—of elderly and disabled tenants. More generally, investments in our transportation and housing infrastructure would be altered. The associated jobs would be lost.

This bill is already underfunded, Mr. Chairman. It has got to be revisited when we have a budget agreement that lets us do a decent job with this bill.

So this amendment goes in exactly the wrong directions. It would encourage the agencies not to do more with less, but to do less with less, and it would be a body blow to our constituents and our communities.

Mr. Chairman, I strongly urge opposition to the amendment.

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, let me tell you why this is the right approach. Our States, who can't go print money in order to balance their budget, utilize across-the-board cuts. Look at Tennessee, Massachusetts, Washington State, New Jersey, and Colorado. They all employ this. Here is why, if you want to engage State employees and Federal employees, and bring the agencies into the process, you say: Okay. We have set your budget levels, we have appropriated your money, now we are coming to you. You are a part of the team, and we need you to engage in how we best save taxpayer money.

This is why it works in the States. When I was in the State senate in Tennessee, if we didn't balance the budget, we didn't go home. It is time for the Federal Government to dig deep and engage these employees. You can talk with rank-and-file Federal employees. I have done it many times. They say we know how we can save money, but they are not incentivized to do so. Let's challenge them. Let's engage them. Let's have them bring forward their best ideas.

A penny on a dollar? Absolutely. We are doing this for the children. We are doing this for future generations. We are doing this for our Nation's fiscal health, and we are doing it to preserve our sovereignty to get these debt levels down.

It is time for us to do that. It is responsible budgeting. It is time for everybody to be a part of the team, putting this Nation back on the road to fiscal health, to a balanced budget, and being respectful of the taxpayer and a good steward of the taxpayers' money.

Mr. Chairman, I encourage my colleagues to vote ''yes'' on this amendment, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Tennessee will be postponed.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MS. NORTON

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. ____. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used in contravention of the 5th or 14th Amendment to the Constitution or title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 287, the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia.

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, I rise to offer an amendment to prohibit the use of Federal funds to stop, investigate, detain, or arrest people on highways based on their physical appearance in violation of the Fifth and 14th Amendments of the United States Constitution and title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. This is the same amendment I successfully offered to the fiscal year 2015 T-HUD appropriations bill and was agreed to by a voice vote on the House floor and was included in the fiscal year 2015 omnibus bill. I ask the same for the current amendment, which, like the one passed by the House last year, seeks to prevent profiling by law enforcement officials and to ensure that citizens are not stopped, investigated, or detained based on their color or other inherent physical appearance.

The Supreme Court, in Whren v. United States, held that profiling based on physical appearance on highways violates equal protection of the laws. Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, whose 50th anniversary we celebrated in 2014, enforces the 14th Amendment and applies to funding for all Federal agencies and departments. My amendment carries out this title VI mandate as expressed in transportation funding in particular.

Federal guidance regarding the use of race by a Federal law enforcement official finds that racial profiling is not merely wrong, but is also ineffective. Not only Blacks and Hispanics are affected, but many others in our country as well, given the increasing diversity of American society.

The United States Department of Justice's Bureau of Justice Statistics reports that Whites are stopped at a rate of 3.6 percent, but Blacks at 9.5 percent and Hispanics at 8.8 percent, more than twice that of Whites. The figures are roughly the same regardless of region or State.

In Minnesota, for example, a statewide study of racial profiling found that African American, Hispanic, and Native American drivers were stopped and searched far more often than Whites, yet contraband was found more frequently in cars where White drivers had been stopped.

In Texas, where disproportionate stops and searches of African Americans and Hispanics were found to have taken place, it was also found that Whites more often were carrying contraband.

Earlier this Congress, I reintroduced the Racial Profiling Prevention Act, my bill to reestablish a popular Federal program aimed at reducing racial profiling. This bill permits States to apply for grants to develop racial profiling laws, to collect and maintain data on traffic stops, to fashion programs to reduce racial profiling, and to train law enforcement officers.

Nearly half the States participated in the program when it was in existence, which shows both the need and the interest in our country in tackling this civil rights issue. I got this program included in the surface transportation law in 2005, but that program expired in 2009. I will try to get this bill included in the surface transportation reauthorization bill we will be writing this year, but in the meantime, a formal prohibition on racial profiling is in order. Meanwhile, Congress should have no hesitation in carrying out the 14th Amendment and the 1964 Civil Rights Act mandate regarding Federal funding of transportation, and neither the House nor the Senate hesitated last year.

Considering our country's history and increasing diversity, we are late in barring profiling at the national level. At the very least, Federal taxpayers should not be compelled to subsidize the unconstitutional practice of profiling by law enforcement officials in the States.

Mr. Chairman, I urge the adoption of this amendment, especially in light of recent issues in cities like Ferguson and Baltimore.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. GOSAR

Mr. GOSAR. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. ____. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used to carry out the rule entitled ''Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing'', published by the Department of Housing and Urban Development in the Federal Register on July 19, 2013 (78 Fed. Reg. 43710; Docket No. FR-5173-P-01) or to carry out the notice entitled ''Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing Assessment Tool'', published by the Department of Housing and Urban Development in the Federal Register on September 26, 2014 (79 Fed. Reg. 57949; Docket No. FR-5173-N-02).

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 287, the gentleman from Arizona and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arizona.

□ 0930

Mr. GOSAR. Mr. Chairman, I rise today to offer an amendment intended to prevent yet another costly overreach by the Federal Government into the jurisdiction of local towns and communities.

Last Congress, during debate on this bill, the House passed an amendment of mine to prevent funds for HUD's proposed new regulation that will allow bureaucrats in Washington, D.C., to get in the middle of local planning and zoning and prohibit community development block grant funds from going to communities that need them.

The amendment seeks to once again defund and block this new regulation that was not approved by Congress. HUD's misguided rule would grant the Department authority to dictate local zoning requirements in any community across the country that applies for a community development block grant.

According to reports, in 2012, this rule would have negatively impacted more than 1,200 municipalities throughout the country, causing these communities to forfeit millions that are meant to help the neediest of families.

Once again, this flawed proposal by HUD will increase local taxes, depress property values, and cause further harm to impoverished communities that are actually in need of these funds.

These burdensome zoning rules that would be imposed by HUD bureaucrats on localities would be derived from tracked resident data based on citizens' race, sex, religion, and other federally protected demographics.

Multiple watchdog groups have raised serious and valid concerns about HUD's proposal. A trial run of this rule already took place in New York. It failed miserably, and a local county was initially forced to forego $12 million in funds that would have benefited the community due to the impractical and unrealistic requirements associated with the misguided agency regulation.

The county had intended to use a large portion of these block grant funds to establish public housing for individuals in need. But recently, the United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit ruled in favor of the county and granted a stay against HUD's attempts to reallocate those millions.

This new regulation that is sitting at OMB is very dangerous and, worst of all, unnecessary. The Federal Government already has the authority to withhold grant money from communities that violate the law. And to clarify, I do mean the actual law in the United States Code, as opposed to overreaching executive dictums.

American citizens and communities should be free to choose where they would like to live and not be subject to Federal neighborhood microengineering at the behest of overreaching Federal bureaucrats.

Further, HUD officials shouldn't be holding hostage grant moneys aimed at community improvement based on its unrealistic utopian ideas of what every community should resemble. Local zoning decisions have traditionally been, and should always be, made by local communities, not bureaucrats in Washington, D.C.

I ask my colleagues to support this commonsense amendment because it keeps the Federal Government out of your backyard and prevents the Feds from reorganizing communities to a fantastical standard.

I ask my colleagues to support this amendment because it aims to treat municipalities and individual citizens

as capable and intelligent, rather than disenfranchised, divided, and coddled groups in need of protection from a problem that does not exist.

As always, I thank the chairman and ranking member for their continued work on the committee.

With that, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. Mr. Chairman, I claim the time in opposition.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to this amendment.

The rule in question, HUD's rule, is intended to help communities more fully comply with the law and to avoid costly and time-consuming legal challenges.

The charge that this rule injects HUD into local planning and zoning conditions is simply inaccurate. Nor does it set up additional hurdles to Federal funding. That is inaccurate too.

The rule allows for communities to better understand local conditions and to create locally decided and implemented solutions.

I don't understand why we would want to revert back to a standard that relied on drawn-out litigation rather than simply presenting communities up front with information on local housing conditions and letting them address their needs. I know my local officials prefer community developed solutions over decrees that are judicially imposed.

With that, I yield to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. ELLISON), a distinguished member of the Financial Services Committee, to express his opposition to this amendment.

Mr. ELLISON. Mr. Chairman, I want to thank the gentleman for the time.

Let's talk about what we are really actually talking about. We are trying to fight racial segregation. That is what this is all about. Our Nation, the Nation I love, held slaves for 246 years and did Jim Crow segregation for another 100 years, and that created racial segregation patterns which this Member is trying to stop us from correcting. This is deeply offensive.

I just want to say that when I think about the progress that our Nation has made so that when we say ''all men are created equal'' and when we say ''liberty and justice for all,'' that it will be true. This amendment is saying no, we are not going to allow it to be true; we are going to keep residential segregation based on race; we are going to make communities balkanize.

When I hear somebody say something like the Federal Government should stay out of local affairs, that sounds like some states' rights talk from 1955. That sounds like something really offensive to me.

Look, we need HUD to help implement affirmatively furthering fair housing rules. We need that. We need HUD to expand its efforts to fight discrimination and promote equal opportunity in every community.

Too often in this country, too many people's economic opportunities, their life chances, are limited by where they live. And yes, the Federal Government should promote equality and should promote fair housing. Affirmatively furthering a fair housing rule helps to do that. Why we would want to strip it out makes absolutely no sense to me.

I urge Members to understand what is going on right here and to very fervently vote ''no'' on the Gosar amendment.

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GOSAR. Mr. Chairman, how dare the opposition create and instigate racism. This is about decisions made at the local level and the local level knowing what is best for their communities. There is nothing of the sort that the gentleman from Minnesota brought up in regard to that attitude that I brought forward.

This is an overreach of the Federal Government instilling in our local communities where, how, and when people are going to live. That is the wrong way to be. Instead of building cripples like we are doing right now with the Federal Government, we ought to make sustainable communities that are based on local ideas and principles.

I ask all Members to vote for this amendment because it definitely rejects the overreach of the Federal Government.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. GOSAR).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. GOSAR. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Arizona will be postponed.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MS. NORTON

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. ____. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used to permit air transportation service between midnight and 6 a.m. at Ronald Reagan National Airport (DCA).

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 287, the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia.

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, I rise to offer an amendment that would prohibit Federal funds from being used to permit airline service between midnight and 6 a.m. at Ronald Reagan National Airport.

Last month, I held a widely attended community meeting with standing room only on airport airplane noise with residents of Palisades, Foxhall, Georgetown, Hillandale, and other impacted neighborhoods in the District of Columbia. Representatives of the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority, the Federal Aviation Administration, and residents sat on a panel while we discussed airplane noise that has completely disrupted the life of this community.

Over the last 18 months, D.C. residents have reported an increase in air traffic activity during nighttime and early morning hours, breaking the sleep of children and adults alike. During this time period, one airline added two flights that arrive at Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport after midnight and three flights that depart before 5 a.m.

As of now, there is no congressional prohibition, none whatsoever, on nighttime flights at Ronald Reagan National Airport. Until recent years, however, flights at this airport could not land after 10 p.m. or take off before 7 a.m.

My amendment gives airlines greater latitude without introducing continuing sleepless nights for residents. Congress can settle this issue in the Nation's Capital to provide relief to those residents who suffer from airline noise night after night and early morning after early morning.

I urge the adoption of my amendment, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Mr. Chairman, I claim the time in opposition.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Florida is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Mr. Chairman, at this time, I will have to oppose this amendment.

I am actually concerned about the potential unintended consequences of this amendment. We don't know all of the potential impacts of this amendment, from safety to capacity to, frankly, the effect on local economics.

We have made in this bill an effort not to legislatively direct specific flight restrictions or flight paths. As you can well imagine, Mr. Chairman, there are a lot of these issues out there, but we have made the decision to not do that.

And again, we just don't know all of the potential unintended consequences, so I would respectfully have to urge a ''no'' vote.

I yield the balance of my time to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. PRICE).

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the chairman yielding.

I would simply add an observation about the situation that this and other

amendments we may be considering today point to with respect to the pending FAA authorization. It is expiring at the end of this fiscal year.

Our colleagues on the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee are exploring options to reform the FAA. One of them includes separating the FAA from the Department of Transportation and allowing the FAA more independence over the use of its resources.

This is an important time to encourage our colleagues to think very carefully about that, about whether a more independent FAA, one that does not have to rely on annual appropriations, would be as attentive to concerns such as our colleague raises today, concerns about noise, concerns about flight paths.

We ought to move very cautiously in this area. I have misgivings about the piecemeal approach, but I believe there is an important message that is being delivered to the leadership of the FAA. I strongly urge the Administrator to ensure the FAA is more attentive to the concerns that are raised by communities when developing their new flight procedures.

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Chairman, while I understand the concerns of my friend on the other side of the aisle, and I appreciate the remarks of my friend on this side, I do alert the House to the fact that I am at least speaking from precedent.

I understand that all over the United States there are people who may have similar concerns. But remember, we are talking about a jurisdiction which in recent years has had no flights between 10 and 7, and now there are some airlines that have taken advantage of the fact that there are no limit on slots at Reagan National Airport.

This is a community in the Nation's Capital that is metropolitan in scope. The Nation's Capital is different from many other communities. I ask the House—and I certainly appreciate the remarks concerning possible privatization of FAA—to bear in mind that it is Congress that is ultimately the arbiter of such concerns.

I urge adoption of my amendment and yield back the balance of my time.

□ 0945

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON).

The amendment was rejected.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. GOSAR

Mr. GOSAR. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. ____. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used to implement, administer, or enforce the rule entitled ''Hazardous Materials: Enhanced Tank Car Standards and Operational Controls for High-Hazard Flammable Trains'' published by the Department of Transportation in the Federal Register on May 8, 2015 (80 Fed. Reg. 26643 et seq.).

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 287, the gentleman from Arizona and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arizona.

Mr. GOSAR. Mr. Chairman, I rise today to offer an amendment which would prohibit funds for the implementation of the Department of Transportation's bungled new regulations for rail tank car standards.

I am strongly in favor of robust standards and best practices which actually improve the safety and efficiency of oil-by-rail transport. However, the new tank car rule completely missed the mark.

Instead of utilizing the expertise and practical experience of the rail, oil, and manufacturing industries, the Obama administration developed a series of special interest regulations at the behest of extremist environmental groups that seem more intent on thwarting the American energy renaissance than on actually creating a safer rail network.

In fact, the only reason these new regulations were even proposed is because of a misguided lawsuit filed against the DOT by the Sierra Club.

Analytics firm ICF International estimated the cost of these new regulations to top $42 billion, which will be laid on the backs of individual consumers and hard-working Americans. I repeat, $42 billion will be lost to our economy as a result of this new rule. These costly regulations will be reflected not only in the price we pay at the pump, but also in the price of manufacturing the millions of products that use plastics and chemicals derived from American petroleum.

The most egregious part is that these regulations don't even address the root cause of these accidents, which are related to track conditions and human error.

This new rule is nothing more than regulation in search of a problem. Department of Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx said as much in 2014 when he admitted: ''The truth is that 99.9 percent of these oil shipments reach their destinations safely.''

These new and overreaching mandates require railroad companies to unnecessarily increase their steel tank walls and will require significant upgrades and retrofitting for an estimated 154,500 tank cars. In fact, The Wall Street Journal has reported: ''The steel jacket alone would lower a car's 30,000-gallon capacity by about 800 gallons, forcing shippers to deploy more cars, according to rail industry analysts.''

Clearly, this is an unintended consequence of these new regulations for a .01 percent problem, which actually increases this .01 percent user accident rate percentage by requiring significantly more railcars to actually haul the amount of oil.

In addition, the aggressive timeline proposed by the DOT for completing these retrofits is unrealistic and could harm consumers by disrupting the production and transportation of goods that play major roles in our economy, including chemicals, gasoline, crude oil, and ethanol.

If Democrats and this administration were really concerned about rail safety for transporting oil, they would approve the Keystone pipeline. Pipelines are the safest way to transfer crude.

Our country is in the midst of an energy renaissance which is driving a much-needed economic revival in American manufacturing. We should be pursuing thoughtful, fact-based best practices, instead of adding artificial constraints on the growth of the American energy sector focused on a 1 percent problem that is caused by user error.

I encourage my colleagues to support my amendment which would prohibit the implementation of this extraneous new rule and to insist that the Department of Transportation pursue a more feasible, data-driven approach that has safety standards in mind.

I thank the chair and ranking member for their leadership on this bill.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. Mr. Chairman, I claim the time in opposition.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. Mr. Chairman, I rise, honestly, in some disbelief that this amendment is actually being offered.

Members of Congress and industry stakeholders have been calling for months for the DOT to complete its rulemaking to update the integrity of tank cars that carry energy products and other hazardous materials. The DOT got the final rule out on May 8, and now, today, the gentleman wants to stop the implementation of that rule in its tracks.

There have been countless examples of derailments involving trains that carry crude oil and other energy products. These incidents have resulted in explosive fires that burn for days. The incident that occurred in Quebec resulted in the preventable deaths of almost 50 people.

U.S. and Canadian transportation officials have worked hard to try to improve the safe transportation of these dangerous products. The railroad industry wants stronger cars. Safety groups want stronger cars. Communities desperately want stronger cars.

We ought not to delay the implementation of this long-awaited rule, so I urge my colleagues to oppose the amendment.

I am now happy to yield to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DIAZ-

BALART), our distinguished subcommittee chairman.

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Chairman, I also need to first recognize and thank the sponsor of the amendment. I am grateful that he is so vigilant as the Federal Government does have a tendency to overregulate and to, frankly, sometimes do so, I would say, irresponsibly. However, in this case, I have to oppose his amendment.

We have seen some horrific accidents recently associated with crude oil, and I think most Americans would agree that we need to do what we can in a reasonable fashion to try to stop that from happening.

While I am grateful for the sponsor of the amendment for always being vigilant on making sure the government doesn't overregulate, in this case, again, I respectfully have to oppose his amendment and urge a ''no'' vote.

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GOSAR. Mr. Chairman, I want to make sure everybody understands that user error and train track applications are the ones that have actually caused these problems.

When you actually look at a solution to a fact-based application, we ought to be spending more time on engineering errors and track conditions than we are over something that is misguided, like these tank car metals.

I urge all of my colleagues to vote in favor of the Gosar amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. GOSAR).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. GOSAR. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Arizona will be postponed.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. POLIS

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

At the end of the bill, insert the following:

SEC. ___. Section 5309(a) of title 49, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in paragraph (3) by inserting ''or as merited by ridership demands'' after ''weekend days'';

(2) in paragraph (4)(A) by inserting ''or includes performance features that otherwise ensure reliable travel times for public transportation operating in a separated right-of-way in a shared-use facility'' after ''peak periods''; and

(3) in paragraph (4)(C)(iii) by inserting ''or as merited by ridership demands'' after ''weekend days''.

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Mr. Chairman, I reserve a point of order on the gentleman's amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. A point of order is reserved.

Pursuant to House Resolution 287, the gentleman from Colorado and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Colorado.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Chairman, on behalf of a number of Western Representatives, I am proud to offer this bipartisan amendment, along with Mr. COFFMAN, Mr. PERLMUTTER, Mr. SCHWEIKERT, Mrs. KIRKPATRICK, Ms. MCSALLY, and Ms. DEGETTE.

As we know and as has often been mentioned here on the floor, transportation is the lifeblood of this country. It moves people, goods, ideas, and information. Denver, Boulder, Fort Collins, and Broomfield, in my district, are some of the fastest growing cities in the country.

The majority of our tourists—over 46 million in 2014—make their way through the Denver Metro area; but the very things that make our State a popular home as well as a popular tourist destination—including hiking, biking, hunting, fishing, skiing—challenge growth and infrastructure as well.

Despite that fact that these cities are growing at significant rates and tourism is heavily congesting space, many of the major thoroughfares intersecting the region have not been expanded in decades.

Highway 70 West, our major tourism artery to our world-class ski resorts, stretches from the Denver Metro area out to our 14,000-foot peaks. I–25 North takes our visitors north of Denver and through Longmont, Loveland, Fort Collins, all the way to Wyoming.

These two highways are effectively the only major arteries traveling north and west of Denver and the only option for residents and visitors to my district to even get out of Vail, Breckenridge, or Fort Collins; and in some places, these highways narrow to as little as two lanes, meaning hard-working constituents who commute every day across my district might wait for hours every day just to go back and forth.

Tourists, likewise, spend long times waiting to get out of their destination towns or to their our attractions.

Worse yet, Mr. Chairman, is a lack of a clear solution. You cannot simply expand a road that winds up some of the steepest peaks in the United States, and it is very costly to expand a tunnel under a large mountain.

One of the only good options that we have for quick, reliable, and affordable mass public transportation is bus rapid transit systems. On Highway 36, our main artery from Boulder to Denver, we recently began operating a BRT system with huge success.

This system shares a HOT lane with high-occupancy vehicles that allows for expedited and assured arrive times. It is used by hundreds of people every day for their commutes. That tool, however, was recently taken out of the toolbox for States across the West.

A hugely problematic change to our surface transportation and authorization MAP–21 bill 3 years ago was the heavy restrictions placed on project eligibility for capital investment grants that build BRT systems nationwide.

Unfortunately, for the first time in history, Congress required that BRT systems have access to an exclusive lane and operate as regularly during nonpeak weekday hours and weekends as they do during peak hours. That simply doesn't match the reality on the ground in places like Colorado and Arizona.

Mr. Chairman, we need access to these grants. The ability to create and innovate in transportation should be encouraged by Congress; yet we are removing the very critical area of investment for BRTs under the current MAP–21 rule, barring them from BRT eligibility because we don't have the capacity to add additional lanes, nor does it make any sense to reserve a lane solely for bus traffic, nor does it make any sense in our commuter and tourism corridors to have buses every couple of minutes on, let's say, a Tuesday at 2 p.m. or on a Sunday at 9 p.m. Ridership and data should drive these decisions, not Washington bureaucrats and not Congress.

My amendment would allow our States and localities the flexibility we need to create the best possible surface transportation system in our area. There simply isn't a one size fits all when it comes to growth and infrastructure.

I encourage this body to take into account the needs of States like Colorado and Arizona.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Mr. Chairman, I reserve a point of order.

The Acting CHAIR. A point of order is reserved.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Chairman, parliamentary inquiry.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman will state his parliamentary inquiry.

Mr. POLIS. Did the gentleman invoke his point of order or reserve a point of order?

The Acting CHAIR. The Chair understood that the gentleman from Florida reserved a point of order.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Chairman, instead of giving top-down directives from Washington, we should be allowing for the equity of Federal resources and take into account local needs. What works for some transportation corridors might not work for others. We simply have different needs with regard to our computing patterns and tourism patterns in other areas of the country.

I am proud to bring up this amendment with a strong bipartisan coalition of Members, which includes Representatives COFFMAN, PERLMUTTER, SCHWEIKERT, DEGETTE, MCSALLY, and KIRKPATRICK, because we can't effectively discuss funding levels like those in the underlying bill without first putting in place equitable policies that encourage innovation for their disbursement.

I ask that my colleagues work with me and the coalition of Members I have named to find and enact a fix as we move forward with the transportation reauthorization later this summer.

I yield to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DIAZ-BALART) to see if he will be willing to work with us with regard to finding a fix on this policy issue.

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman.

I know the gentleman is very committed and has worked awfully hard. I look forward to working with him on this.

Again, I know how passionate he is about this, and I look forward to working with him.

Mr. POLIS. In reclaiming my time, Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent to withdraw this amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Colorado?

There was no objection.

□ 1000

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. GOSAR

Mr. GOSAR. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. ____. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used for the Federal Transit Administration's Rapid Growth Area Transit Program.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 287, the gentleman from Arizona and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arizona.

Mr. GOSAR. Mr. Chairman, I rise today to offer a commonsense, fiscally responsible amendment that will ensure scarce transportation dollars are going towards highways, bridges, and other critical infrastructure that are in desperate need of repair.

The Obama administration's budget request for the fiscal year 2016 included $500 million for a new discretionary grant program for bus transit. The administration made the same new request in fiscal year 2015 for this same misguided program. This request was rejected in its entirety last year, and the proposed rapid growth area transit program received no funding in the CR/Omnibus. With significant infrastructure needs, including road and bridge maintenance, now is not the time to spend $500 million on a new discretionary bus transit program.

In fact, the Obama administration actually proposed two new programs this year that sought funding from the highway trust fund, both of which asked for $500 million for each. The committee made clear in the committee report that they chose to fund the new $500 million Fixing and Accelerating Surface Transportation, or FAST, program in this bill. If I had to fund only one of these two new programs, that is exactly the one I would have funded.

So I applaud the chairman, ranking member, and committee for the choice they made, and also for apparently choosing not to fund the proposed rapid growth area transit program once again in this legislation.

Having said that, there are no detailed summaries of the particular program accounts because authorizing language has not yet been passed. In addition, nothing is said about the proposed $500 million new discretionary bus transit program in the bill or the committee report. My amendment is also necessary to prevent funds from being transferred to this account.

A recent economic analysis found: ''Over the past few decades lawmakers have diverted more trust fund resources . . . thus starving general purpose roads of funds,'' and, ''Transit—including light rail, trolleys, and buses—marks the largest diversion. In 2010 alone, it received 17 percent, or $6 billion, of Federal highway user fees, even though it accounted for only 1 percent of the Nation's surface travel. Despite receiving a portion of Federal user fees for decades, transit has failed to reduce traffic congestion or even maintain its share of urban travel. For example, between 1983 and 2010, traffic volumes in the Nation's 51 major metropolitan areas increased by 87 percent, peak travel times in those areas increased by 125 percent, and transit's share of passenger miles fell by one-fourth.''

I encourage my colleagues to support this amendment.

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. GOSAR. I yield to the gentleman from Florida.

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Chairman, I just want to once again repeat what I said a little while ago. I want to thank the gentleman for his hard work. It is evident that he spends the time and he does his homework. I am greatly appreciative of that. I have no objection to the gentleman's amendment.

Mr. GOSAR. I thank the gentleman for his support.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. GOSAR).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MS. LEE

Ms. LEE. I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. _____. None of the funds made available in this Act may be used to administer, implement, or enforce section 193 or section 414 of this Act.

Ms. LEE (during the reading). Mr. Chair, I ask unanimous consent that the reading to be dispensed with.

The Acting CHAIR. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from California?

There was no objection.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 287, the gentlewoman from California and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California.

Ms. LEE. Mr. Chairman, I want to thank Mr. SANFORD for his leadership as it relates to this amendment and helping us try to end these outdated and failed policies toward Cuba. I rise in support of our amendment, and I am very proud to cosponsor this simple, bipartisan amendment. This amendment would strike two provisions included in this bill that would further limit travel to and from Cuba via flights and ferries. Not only are these provisions inappropriate policy riders, they would deny Americans the right to travel to Cuba.

I understand some of my colleagues, including our subcommittee chair, have a personal interest in Cuba, yet personal interest should not stall progress nor interfere with what is good for the American people. I am joined by many of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle and a diverse coalition of organizations and businesses in strong opposition to this and other attempts to undermine efforts to normalize relations with Cuba.

Not only are the current provisions in this bill wrong for diplomacy, they are patently antibusiness. That is why this amendment is supported by the United States Chamber of Commerce, Orbitz, the American Society of Travel Agents, and the broad-based coalition Engage Cuba.

These provisions that are currently in the bill set us back 50 years. They would eliminate flights that airlines have already invested in and would kill a new market for maritime carriers. Simply put, these provisions are an affront to Americans' basic freedom. Cuba is the only country in the world, including North Korea, Iran, China, and Vietnam, where Americans cannot freely travel. The President's announcement to expand travel was a step in the right direction.

We should be passing the bipartisan and bicameral Freedom to Travel to Cuba Act, H.R. 664, which I am proud to cosponsor with my colleague Mr. SANFORD, rather than moving backwards with these misguided provisions.

Opponents to normalize the relations are quick to claim that renewed engagement somehow rewards the Cuban Government. That couldn't be more wrong. In order to engage on issues like human rights and democracy, Americans should be able to do just that. This amendment allows that.

Those who are serious about moving our relations forward to the betterment of both Americans and Cubans know that increased exchange and formalized relations are the path we need to be on. A majority of Americans and Cubans agree: we need a 21st century approach to our relations with this nation 90 miles away from our shores.

This is 2015, my colleagues, not 1960. The rest of the world is doing business with Cuba, allows its citizens to travel to Cuba, and also has normal diplomatic relations with Cuba. The United States is isolated. This amendment begins to thaw that freeze and to keep our country moving forward in this next decade and, further, to become part of the world family who understands that Americans should, like other citizens in other countries, have a right to travel wherever they so desire.

I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SANFORD).

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman has 1½ minutes remaining.

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. Mr. Chairman, I intend to strike the last word so as to give the speakers more time.

Ms. LEE. I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SANFORD).

Mr. SANFORD. I appreciate the gentlewoman yielding me this time.

Mr. Chairman, my comments will be brief. It is quite simple. The concept is this: if I travel on Delta Airlines to Moscow, it does not mean that I support Putin; if I travel on Royal Caribbean to Shanghai, it does not mean I support the Chinese regime.

This bill is fundamentally, as my colleague from California has pointed out, about Americans' right to travel. It is, secondarily, about something we talk about as Republicans, which is balance of power. If we don't want the President overstepping his bounds, we shouldn't overstep our bounds as Members of Congress. That is precisely what this bill does in trying to proscribe the President, though he has full authority within the licensing, within the Department of Commerce, to do as he has done.

Finally, I think it is about American opportunity. Why should we have Canadian or Mexican jets traveling to a country that we are allowed to travel to rather than American jets?

Ms. LEE. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Mr. Chairman, I claim the time in opposition.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Florida is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Mr. Chairman, just a couple things from the debate that we have heard. The sponsor of the amendment talked about that this may be a personal issue for some. Mr. Chairman, let me be very frank and very clear: this is not a personal issue.

Let me also talk about what the language in the bill does that this amendment is trying to take out. It doesn't deal with the overriding issue of policy versus whether we like the President's policy or not. It deals with one specific issue and one specific issue only, Mr. Chairman: whether we should condone, whether we should approve, whether we should permit the trafficking of confiscated—in other words, stolen—property.

When the gentleman from my side of the aisle said that, you know, this is an issue about traveling to other countries, when we travel to Russia, we should be able to do that, that is fine. But is he also saying, which is what this amendment says, that we should condone the use of stolen, confiscated property, property that was stolen and confiscated illegally from Americans? So if you support this amendment, Mr. Chairman, what you are saying is it is okay to do business on property that was stolen from Americans.

Now, I can understand having differences of opinion on overall policy, but the language in the mark deals specifically with confiscated—in other words, stolen—properties from Americans. For the life of me, I would never understand how anybody can justify doing business on confiscated, stolen property and then try to obfuscate the issue talking about policy, which is not what is in the mark.

I yield such time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN), a distinguished gentlewoman from the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. I thank the chairman for yielding.

As the chairman points out, do we really want to trample on the property rights of innocent Americans whose properties were illegally stolen by the Cuban regime?

The gentleman from South Carolina is correct, the concept is simple, but the concept he doesn't seem to understand is this: it is not about travel to Cuba. This is about protecting American properties that were illegally seized by the Castro government. We are selling out these legitimate property claims to thousands of American citizens. Respect for private property rights, Mr. Chairman, has been a consistent American policy since the founding of our Republic.

The Cuban regime illegally confiscated property from American citizens. Our citizens have not been compensated, and we know there is no respect for the rule of law in Cuba. If an American's property has been seized, what does that American do? Well, there is no fair court for recess. Let me tell you what the Inter-American Law Review has noted about the Cuban regime's confiscation of U.S. assets. It says it is the ''largest uncompensated taking of American property by a foreign government in history.''

So this is what this amendment is about. If this amendment to strike the use of confiscated property were to pass, we would be, in essence, allowing and condoning the trafficking of stolen goods. Currently, there are over 8,800 claims certified by the Foreign Claims Settlement Commission, which is under the U.S. Department of Justice. American citizens whose properties were seized illegally—almost 9,000 have filed claims—the Castro regime doesn't care. These certified claims, are they just small? No. They are worth approximately $8 billion.

This body must protect the interests of those citizens, of all of our citizens, so I implore our colleagues to not support these misguided attempts to normalize relations with the Cuban regime on the backs of American citizens. We are better than that. We must not allow this amendment to pass. We are about protecting American private property rights. This language in the bill protects American citizens, constituents that we represent in our congressional districts.

Is this Chamber really going to side with a Communist tyrant in Cuba over American citizens? The Cuban regime should not be allowed to use American properties stolen from our citizens for its commercial benefit. If the U.S. endorses such a practice, what message will we be sending to other rogue regimes who would love to be confiscating American properties?

So, if we want to help the Cuban people, and I am sure that all of us do, let's not give their oppressors more resources to violate their rights. We are here to protect private property rights of American citizens. We must reject this amendment, and rather than striking the provisions directly, which my colleagues could have done, they are offering limitation amendments that would prohibit funds to enforce those same provisions. Let's not do this.

I urge my colleagues to oppose this amendment. Let's not trample on the rights of American citizens.

□ 1015

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. LEE. Mr. Chairman, I yield the balance of my time to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SANFORD).

Mr. SANFORD. Three quick points. If you follow this logic, then no American plane should fly into Saigon, no American plane should fly into China, no American plane should fly into Russia, because indeed property was confiscated at the time of the Russian revolution, the Chinese taking, or, for that matter, what happened in Vietnam. There are American properties there.

This is not about American property rights. This is about legalistically trying to undo that which has been changed.

The other thing it is about is, again, legalism. What the bill actually says is if a boat docks in the previous 180 days within 7 miles of a port or property where there may be land somewhere connected.

This is a legalistic attempt to undo what the President has proposed.

The Acting CHAIR. The time of the gentlewoman from California has expired.

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last

word in order to express my strong support for this amendment and my appreciation to our colleague from California for offering it.

Mr. Chairman, I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. FARR).

Mr. FARR. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Chairman, this is the bill, and the language that we are trying to strike out reads: ''None of the funds made available in this Act may be used to facilitate new scheduled air transportation originating from the United States if such flights would land on, or pass through, property confiscated by the Cuban Government, including property in which a minority interest was confiscated, as the terms confiscated, the Cuban Government, and property are defined in'' the paragraphs below.

This is just a job killer for Americans. We have a hundred thousand Americans who are visiting Cuba illegally. You know how they get there? They go to Mexico. Who gets the business? Mexican airlines. They go to Canada. Who gets the business? Canadian airlines. Or, any other country in the world that has normal travel relationships with Cuba.

You are just cutting off the ability for American enterprise to get access to Cuba, where everybody wants to go, because there are family feuds going on here, because it is including property which has a minority interest.

How are the airlines, how are the people going to decide what property has been confiscated, who is the ownership title? Those are big legalistic problems in the United States when we confiscate property to build freeways or railways.

This amendment really screws up the ability for America to be involved in a business that Americans want to do. They want to travel. Censorship of American travel—this is just ridiculous in these days.

What is the message to the world? Do we prohibit our citizens from going to countries that are communist countries? You can go to Vietnam, China, and Russia, but you can't go to Cuba because there is a lot of feuding going on in Florida.

In fact, Florida is going to benefit from this because where are the airports that these scheduled airlines are going to leave from? They are Tampa, they are Miami, the businesses in your State.

So if you want to give American jobs to Americans, and you want commerce to occur, and you don't want to continue this censorship of Cuba, then vote for this amendment.

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. I yield to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE).

Ms. LEE. A couple of points I would just like to make.

First of all, confiscated property 50 years-plus ago should be part of negotiations in terms of bilateral discussions as it relates to normalizing relations with Cuba. What is in this bill right now is what we have indicated, and which is why we offer this amendment.

This bill prohibits Americans from traveling to Cuba. It eliminates jobs in America, and it eliminates economic growth through our maritime industry and our airline industry.

Once again, all of the issues that occurred 50 years ago are subject to discussion based on any bilateral negotiations taking place.

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. Could I inquire how much time is remaining?

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. PRICE) has 45 seconds remaining.

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. I yield to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SANFORD).

Mr. SANFORD. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

I would just make three last points. As was correctly pointed out by my colleague from California, indeed this is about American jobs. It indeed is about, again, this larger notion of private property rights.

I would stand my private property rights record up to anybody. I believe strongly in private property rights and legal code, which is why Ms. LEE is correct: should there be bilateral relations between Cuba and the United States, this would be part of that discussion.

But the idea of creating a legal hurdle for an airline not to be able to fly from Miami or Tampa to Havana—and instead, those jobs go to other places around the globe—makes no sense to me.

Finally, I would simply say this. We have tried 50 years of one policy, and it hasn't worked. It was Ronald Reagan who encouraged travel to the Eastern Bloc countries. I think it would make sense in this instance.

The Acting CHAIR. The time of the gentleman from North Carolina has expired.

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Florida is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Mr. Chairman, we have heard a lot of things that, by the way, you will notice, at very few times actually deal with language in the mark, the language in the bill. By the way, for example, that this is going to hurt American jobs.

To argue, Mr. Chairman, that American companies will benefit from trafficking in stolen property that was stolen from American companies I think is probably the definition of an oxymoron, number one.

Number two, there is a lot of obfuscation. The language in the bill doesn't say that Americans can't travel. The language says that they cannot use trafficking in, make a profit from, property that was stolen from Americans. Stolen from Americans.

So I understand that the gentleman says that his property rights record is as good as any, but, Mr. Chairman, the language in the bill deals with a specific issue, and one specific issue alone: Should we condone, should we allow, should we permit, should we encourage the trafficking, the profiting from stolen property—property that was confiscated from Americans, whether there are certified claims or not.

If you support this amendment, Mr. Chairman, you are saying it is okay for folks to traffic in property that was stolen from Americans, illegally stolen from Americans. I think, frankly, that is a sad day.

Mr. Chairman, I yield to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. CURBELO).

Mr. CURBELO of Florida. I thank the chairman for yielding.

Mr. Chairman, it is fascinating to come here to the floor and listen to colleagues who struggle to support free trade agreements with our allies come to the floor and advocate for expanded trade with one of our enemies, taking advantage of properties stolen from American citizens.

I heard that we have a personal interest in this matter—and I do. I am an American citizen. I was born here. And I want to do justice by American property owners.

Shouldn't we resolve these 8,818 claims before proceeding? Shouldn't we do justice by these families, these businesses whose property was stolen with no due process, with no hearing by the Castro government?

Whose side are we on, Mr. Chairman? That is the question here. As Americans, do we want to be on the side of those who were aggrieved by a tyrannical regime—American citizens—or do we want to reward that regime by allowing others now to profit over those stolen properties? That is the question that we need to ask ourselves today.

This is not about travel. No one is here advocating for restricting travel to Cuba. Many people travel to Cuba today legally, and that would not change. But I cannot stand for violating the property rights of my fellow American citizens.

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Mr. Chairman, again, before I yield back, as Mr. CURBELO just mentioned, this is not an issue of travel. This is not an issue of the overriding policy. This is not an issue of even arguing whether President Obama has been a good negotiator or a horrible negotiator on anything. This is about whether we want to condone, permit, accept, in violation of everything that the United States stands for, the trafficking of stolen property, property illegally confiscated from American citizens.

If you support this amendment, Mr. Chairman, you are supporting, you are condoning, you are assisting, you are helping trafficking and the profiting on property that was stolen from Americans.

This cannot stand. This should not stand. I would respectfully ask for a ''no'' vote on this amendment, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from California will be postponed.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. POSEY

Mr. POSEY. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. 416. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used by the Department of Transportation to take any actions with respect to the financing of a new passenger rail project that runs from Orlando to Miami through Indian River County, Florida.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 287, the gentleman from Florida and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida.

Mr. POSEY. Mr. Chairman, All Aboard Florida was presented as a private passenger rail project that would run from Miami to Orlando, and vice versa, along Florida's east coast.

The project was initially sold to the public as the first privately funded and operated passenger train. However, that story soon changed, as All Aboard Florida decided to pursue a $1.6 billion loan from the Department of Transportation. Apparently, because the loan requires a strict Environmental Impact Statement to be completed, All Aboard Florida decided to also apply for $1.75 billion in tax-exempt private activity bonds from the Department of Transportation.

□ 1030

The U.S. Department of Transportation has moved to green light this financing option, even though they have absolutely no statutory authority to do that, and the environmental impact study has yet to be completed. We don't even know if the project is safe or feasible yet.

Furthermore, these trains will move through our small beach towns at speeds of up to 110 miles per hour, with virtually no—none, nada—buffer separating it from our communities.

All Aboard Florida envisions 32 trains running per day, on top of 20 freight trains. That is a lot of traffic. Given how close this track is to our adjacent roads and surrounding neighborhoods, obviously, there are serious safety concerns. Why should you ask taxpayers to be on the hook for this train?

I ask my colleagues to join me in supporting my amendment to stop the Department of Transportation from funding this train.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. Mr. Chairman, I claim the time in opposition.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. Mr. Chairman, I yield to my colleague from Florida (Ms. BROWN).

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Mr. Chairman, here we go again, trying to destroy passenger rail in this country. I don't understand why Republicans refuse to support transportation infrastructure.

Let me tell the gentleman from Florida that our competition is not Georgia, and it is certainly not Alabama. It is Europe. It is Japan. It is China. The people in Florida support All Aboard Florida. This is a system that will go from Orlando to Miami. The studies indicate it is an economic boom to our State.

I just for the life of me don't understand why, without vision, the people perish? Why is it that you can go to Europe and you can get on a train to go from London to Paris—2 hours, 1 hour and 15 minutes—and we don't want that same system here?

Our competition is spending close to 8 percent—8 percent—of their economics for passenger rail, and we fight about 1 percent; yet we can spend close to $300 billion for tax breaks; yet we don't even want to encourage public-private partnerships.

Shame on you. The people in Florida need to be able to move around our State, and this is not just a Florida issue; it is a national issue. Here we are, $2 billion that could fix Amtrak; yet we can do a tax break for close to $300 billion and don't pay for it. I don't understand.

What is wrong with the people's House? Why is it that we don't support transportation infrastructure? This is not just a Florida issue. When we had 9/11, Amtrak was the only entity that was moving people. When we had Katrina, we had over 3,000 people die because they couldn't move around the area.

We need a train that leaves New Orleans to go to Orlando and on down to Miami. That is the future.

Shame on you.

The Acting CHAIR. Members are advised to address their remarks to the Chair and not to other Members in the second person.

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. POSEY. Mr. Chairman, shame on me for asking the Department of Transportation to follow the law, respect the Constitution of the United States, and make economically sound decisions.

This is not a partisan issue, in response to that allegation. In September, I wrote the GAO, along with my colleague from Florida, Representative PATRICK MURPHY, asking them to study the project to ensure taxpayer funds were not at risk.

A recent independent economic analysis conducted by Dr. John Friedman concludes that, even under all optimistic assumptions, AAF will generate losses of more than $100 million and will be unable to service its debt burden. Dr. Friedman has a Ph.D in economics, is a distinguished Brown University professor and former Economic Council special assistant in the current Obama administration.

The Department of Transportation has been unable to explain where they get their authority to authorize bonds for this project. That is because they don't have any authority. They say title 23 funding has been given to the project in the past, which could trigger the bond authority, but have been unable to state where title 23 funds were ever spent, on what projects, and when.

This is just common sense. Now, it might not make some congressional sense to some people, but this is common sense and a simple ask that the Department of Transportation follow the law and not violate the law to help a special interest and put the taxpayers on the hook for $1.75 billion.

I ask my colleagues to join me in supporting this amendment, Mr. Chairman.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Florida (Mr. POSEY).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. POSEY. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Florida will be postponed.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. GALLEGO

Mr. GALLEGO. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

At the end of the bill, before the short title, insert the following:

SEC. ____. None of these funds made available by this Act may be used by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to redesign the Phoenix Metroplex regional airspace.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 287, the gentleman from Arizona and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arizona.

Mr. GALLEGO. Mr. Chairman, I rise to offer an amendment that would prevent the FAA from moving forward with plans to redesign the Phoenix metroplex airspace. Let me explain why it is important to my city.

Imagine living in a quiet neighborhood, then waking up one morning to discover dozen of planes suddenly have been roaring over your head. Next, imagine the frustration of running a business, raising a family, or even trying to get a good night's sleep when your windows are constantly rattling because of the noise of passing aircraft.

Finally, imagine that all of this discomfort was both needless and avoidable, that it was caused by out-of-

touch bureaucrats who rerouted major flight paths over your community without bothering to consult the people that live there.

Unfortunately, for thousands of Phoenix residents, this is not a hypothetical situation. In September of last year, the FAA instituted new flight paths for the aircraft departing from Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport, without any notice for anybody, without any notice to our neighbors. For too many members of my community, these changes have meant more noise and a lower quality of life.

Disturbingly, the FAA altered these flight paths without seeking local input, failing to consult with the community members or civic leaders in the Phoenix area. Not only that, but the FAA also failed to provide a report that was mandated by the previous Congress on Sky Harbor on last year's FAA bill about how it planned to do and change with the patterns. It is now more than 2 months overdue, with no response yet from the FAA.

Mr. Chairman, this isn't how our government is supposed to run, and this is not how the FAA is supposed to operate.

I yield the balance of my time to the gentleman from Arizona.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. Mr. Chairman, I thank Representative GALLEGO. I appreciate that.

Let's put some facts around this. Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport is the tenth busiest airport in the United States, but we have something that is a little unique—and think about this because this is coming to your neighborhood, too.

We actually have a downtown airport. Our city grew up around an airport, so it makes traffic patterns and the mechanics dealing with it quite unique. Also, our big county has about 4.2 million people in it. It is either the third or fourth most populous county in the United States—so a huge population. Remember, Arizona has been attributed as the most urbanized State in the country.

I have a downtown airport, and then the FAA goes and starts to change the flight patterns. When it becomes one of the biggest issues at all of our congressional offices, they are arrogant; they don't return calls. We point out the fact that they are violating last year's law, and they just grin at you and then walk out of the meetings with this sort of arrogant vanity.

This is the process we, as Members—and remember, there are seven congressional districts that touch this Phoenix metroplex area that all care about this. This is our opportunity to at least get our voices heard.

I am going to ask the chairman, please consider what is happening to 4.2 million people in the Phoenix area. The fact of the matter is there is well-established corridors where you don't have to have the effects on the neighborhoods, and we can still be moving to the NextGen if I could find someone at the FAA who would actually listen to our concerns.

Just to finish, this amendment is very straightforward. It would just simply ensure the FAA does not proceed with the redesign of the regional airspace around Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport until these issues are resolved in the local neighborhoods.

Experts tell us that if the flight paths in Phoenix are eventually altered, then the entire metroplex airspace will also need to be revisited. By asking them to slow down, consider the overall effect of what is happening now, we are actually going to do them a favor by not having them to revisit it later on.

Instead of rushing forward, the FAA should do the prudent thing and wait until our communities' concerns have been fully addressed.

In closing, let me just offer a word of warning. For those of you who think this is exclusively a Phoenix problem, just wait because your city could be next, and then you will be dealing exactly with the same FAA relationship that we are dealing with right now, someone who is not responsive to the concerns of both the local politicians, the Members of Congress, and the citizens.

Mr. GALLEGO. I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. JOYCE. Mr. Chairman, I claim the time in opposition.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Ohio is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. JOYCE. Mr. Chairman, I would be concerned about the unintended consequences of the amendment. We don't know all the potential impacts of this amendment, from safety to capacity to local economics.

While I sympathize with both these gentlemen and I pledged to work with the gentleman and his community and the FAA to find a resolution, we have made an effort in this bill not to legislatively direct specific flight restrictions on flight paths.

I urge a ''no'' vote.

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. JOYCE. I yield to the gentleman from North Carolina.

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. I thank the gentleman for yielding. I simply want to add—or to reiterate, I might say—that our subcommittee's fiscal year '15 report required the FAA to work with the Phoenix community on this issue and to report back to the committee on these efforts. We are still waiting for that report.

Again, let me reiterate what I said earlier. The FAA must be more proactive in responding to concerns that are raised by communities. These are legitimate concerns, and the FAA needs to be accountable.

Mr. JOYCE. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. GALLEGO).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. SESSIONS

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

At the end of the bill, before the short title, insert the following new section:

SEC. 416. None of the funds made available by this Act shall be used to support Amtrak's route with the highest loss, measured by contributions/(Loss) per Rider, as based on the National Railroad Passenger Corporation Fiscal Years 2014-2018 Five Year Plan from April 2014.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 287, the gentleman from Texas and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

□ 1045

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Chairman, my amendment is very straightforward. It would eliminate funding for the absolute worst performing line at Amtrak, the Sunset Limited, which runs from New Orleans to Los Angeles.

The Amtrak Reform and Accountability Act of 1997 required that Amtrak operate without any Federal operating assistance after 2002. I have since then offered this amendment each year.

Amtrak was supposed to be free of Federal operating subsidy; yet despite this commonsense requirement that Amtrak cease their fiscal irresponsibility and mismanagement, instead, they turned to continuing this line that costs the taxpayers $405.67 for every single ticket that is bought, for every single trip. That is $405.67 to subsidize the travels of passengers from New Orleans to Los Angeles, a trip that takes nearly 48 hours, assuming the train is on time.

I believe this is exceedingly unlikely also because it has a terrible record of being on time. According to Amtrak's most recent monthly performance report, the Sunset Limited was only on time 42 percent of the time; yet 100 percent of the $405 was paid for the ticket.

This places the Sunset Limited as one of the top 10 worst ontime routes for any of Amtrak's routes in its latest performance report.

Perhaps, Mr. Chairman, taxpayers should be happy when the train is not running, but not running on time, and the cost to the taxpayer is prohibitive. Why does it run this route when Amtrak loses an average of $41 million a year?

Mr. Chairman, my amendment is simply to help Amtrak make the tough decisions that they appear to be incapable of doing themselves. I think it is the first step to instilling a small measure of fiscal discipline in Amtrak. Failure to do so will only continue Amtrak along this process rather them being a north-south provider on both coasts.

I hope my colleagues will join me. Certainly, I know they are taxpayer

advocates that believe as I do. I urge all my colleagues to support this amendment and the underlying legislation.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. Mr. Chairman, I claim the time in opposition.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to this amendment. Our colleague from Texas has offered amendments like this in the past, an attempt to micromanage Amtrak from the floor of the House. I don't think it is a good idea.

We had a vigorous debate last night on the importance of investing in inner city passenger rail. Of course, he will get no quarrel from me or other colleagues, I suspect, in arguing for improved service and arguing for making the service more attractive.

What we are dealing with here—and have been through this whole debate—is a number of colleagues who simply want to defund passenger rail in this country, overlooking the fact that every mode of transportation is subsidized to some degree and that the national interest requires diverse modes of transportation.

Colleagues seem intent on singling out passenger rail for elimination, and we have had amendments offered to this bill that would do just that.

This one is more about micromanagement. It is more about a specific route, the Sunset Limited. This would eliminate the Sunset Limited's long-distance route. It serves communities along the southern tier of the United States. Actually, it serves more than 300,000 passengers annually in five States: Louisiana, Arizona, Texas, New Mexico, and California.

It is no way to run a railroad, if I might say so, and I urge rejection of the amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Chairman, that is 300,000 times $405.67 for every single ticket.

I am not trying to micromanage, nor am I trying to kill Amtrak. I vote for Amtrak; I am for Amtrak, but they also want more and more and need more and more resources to help in their north-south line in the East Coast and the West Coast.

What they are doing is bleeding off their hard-earned money, using the subsidy rather than doing what their original mission should be.

Mr. Chair, I think I support all of Amtrak, and I am for it. This is not micromanaging. It is showing them the obvious things which they need to accomplish.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SESSIONS).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Texas will be postponed.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MS. MAXINE WATERS OF CALIFORNIA

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Chair, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. ____. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used to carry out section 210 of this Act with respect to the Housing Authority of the county of Los Angeles, California.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 287, the gentlewoman from California and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Chairman, I rise to offer an amendment that removes the exemption that the Housing Authority of the County of Los Angeles currently has from the requirement to have a resident of public housing or Section 8 on its governing board.

I am offering this amendment because I have learned that HACoLA is not in compliance with requirements outlined in this exemption, which has directly resulted in a lack of meaningful engagement by residents of the housing authority on important policy issues affecting the effectiveness of the programs that it administers.

In 1998, Congress passed a law requiring that the governing body of a public housing authority must include at least one member who is directly assisted by the housing authority. This provision was an important recognition of the need for the perspective and participation of tenants in the governance of public housing authorities. It is as simple as that.

Mr. Chairman, I ask for an ''aye'' vote, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from California (Ms. MAXINE WATERS).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. SESSIONS

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Chair, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

At the end of the bill, before the short title, insert the following new section:

SEC. 416. None of the funds made available by this Act shall be used to support any Amtrak route whose costs exceed 2 times its revenues, as based on the National Railroad Passenger Corporation Fiscal Years 2014–2018 Five Year Plan from April 2014.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 287, the gentleman from Texas and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Chairman, once again, I stand in trying to help Amtrak to effectively manage its system by taking away those routes that are cost prohibitive.

Mr. Chairman, my amendment would eliminate funding for Amtrak's long-distance routes, which have total direct costs that are more than twice the revenue that they generate. Every single long-distance route that Amtrak provides—those of over 400 miles in length—operates at a loss every month. Eleven routes cost double the amount of revenue they create.

Oh, by the way, Mr. Chair—and this is true since 1997 when I came to Congress—these routes are ineffective and waste valuable taxpayer money, as well as money that could be used in the system for highly used routes for the safety and security of their passengers on north-south routes.

Some argue that many travelers cannot afford to fly and they need a less expensive travel alternative. However, for most of these routes, bus tickets and plane tickets are less expensive, more efficient, and more frequently on time.

Combined, these 11 routes cost the American taxpayer about $500 million in fiscal year 2014 alone. Four lines cost over $50 million each. I think it is clear that government-subsidized rail service on Amtrak does not make economic sense if they have enough money to bleed off $500 million with routes that cost twice in expense what they generate in revenue, so I am offering this amendment again.

I urge all of my colleagues to support this amendment and the underlying legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. Mr. Chairman, I claim the time in opposition.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to this amendment offered by our friend from Texas. This amendment outdoes his last one.

We are now talking about eliminating nine routes, with a total ridership of over 2 million people: the Cardinal and Capitol Limited routes from D.C. to Chicago, through West Virginia, Pennsylvania, Kentucky, Ohio, Indiana; the Southern Crescent, New York City to New Orleans; the Coast Starlight, along the coast of California, Oregon, and Washington.

To elaborate further on our opposition, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER).

Mr. BLUMENAUER. I appreciate the gentleman's courtesy. I appreciate him referencing the Coast Starlight.

This is a self-fulfilling prophecy. Congress has created a difficult situation for Amtrak, consistently short-changing maintenance and capital.

As my good friend from North Carolina points out, all modes of transportation in this country are subsidized by the public. Amtrak is no exception. It provides a variety of services for people.

We are watching on the West Coast ridership increase. It provides an important opportunity for businesspeople. If you talk to businesspeople in Seattle, in Portland, they would say they would like the Federal Government to invest more. It has made a big difference for how they conduct business.

Part of the strength is having a network. Make no mistake, we are, in fact, going to have a passenger rail network in the United States, despite consistent efforts to chop away and minimize it.

China, 6 years ago, had no high-speed rail. Today, they are moving more passengers than the entire air fleet in the United States. We will have higher speed rail, but the question is whether we are going to build on what we have got—American built, American managed—or we will wait until it deteriorates, gets so bad that we end up with a design-build to China, paying more, shipping the profits and the work overseas.

I would suggest it is far better to protect what we have now, build on the progress, not undo the network, and most certainly reject this amendment.

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. I thank the gentleman.

I yield the balance of my time to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. JOYCE).

Mr. JOYCE. I oppose the gentleman's amendment. This amendment has far-reaching implications, and it would shut down 9 of 15 long-distance routes.

I do not believe that an appropriations bill is the place to do this. This would need to be carefully debated and discussed by the committee of jurisdiction.

For these reasons, I urge a ''no'' vote on the amendment.

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Chairman, look, I made a mistake. I came here from business. I came here as somebody that had to operate within the bounds of common sense and doing things that made sense with money and opportunities.

I will just say to you, Mr. Chairman, I am going to stay after this issue. I am all for Amtrak, but not when they continue to have routes that cost twice what the revenue is.

This is what our airlines did for a long time. They provided service, and they went broke, and then we want to turn around and say we are going to subsidize the airlines. Marketplace ideas work, and that is why we are a capitalist country.

I urge my colleagues to think over this commonsense amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

□ 1100

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SESSIONS).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Texas will be postponed.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. SCHIFF

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

At the end of the bill, (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. ___. None of the funds made available by this Act shall be used to enforce section 47524 of title 49, United States Code, or part 161 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations, with regard to noise or access restrictions or to enforce section 47107 of title 49, United States Code, with regard to access restriction on the operation of aircraft by the operate of Bob Hope Airport in Burbank, California.

Mr. SCHIFF (during the reading). Mr. Chair, I ask unanimous consent to dispense with the reading.

The Acting CHAIR. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 287, the gentleman from California and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Chairman, I rise today to urge my colleagues to support the amendment that I am offering along with my southern California colleague, Mr. SHERMAN.

The amendment would allow the Burbank Bob Hope Airport to implement a nighttime curfew between 10 p.m. and 7 a.m. and restore local control to the community that has been denied to them for decades.

Thousands of residents of southern California's San Fernando Valley who live under the flight paths or near the terminals at the Bob Hope Airport endure the house-shaking noise of air traffic during the day and suffer the jarring interruption of their sleep that is caused by a roaring jet taking off or landing.

I want to also distinguish this measure. I know my colleagues have heard some other curfew measures today, and without detracting from them, I want to point out that the facts of this one are quite different. This is, I think, a unique case in the case of Burbank airport.

When Congress passed the 1990 Airport Noise and Control Act, ANCA, it intended to permit airports to implement noise restrictions if they met certain requirements. At that time, Congress exempted several airports from the law's requirements for FAA approval of new noise rules if they had preexisting noise rules in effect to address local concerns. So airports were grandfathered in when ANCA was passed; but because of a mistake, Bob Hope Airport, which had a curfew in place, did not get grandfathered in.

The Bob Hope Airport in Burbank was one of the first airports in the country, in fact, to impose a curfew and has a long history of curfews but, unfortunately, was not given the protection of the grandfather provision of ANCA that several other similar airports received. This amendment would correct this inequity and put Bob Hope on the same footing as several other airports across the country that had curfews before ANCA's passage.

It doesn't set a precedent in terms of other airports, and this would be uniquely confined to the situation involving Bob Hope. By correcting the omission of not allowing Bob Hope Airport to implement on a permanent and mandatory basis curfew which it had, in effect, informally in the 1980s, we would return local control to the community that has sought it for years.

It is also important for my colleagues to understand the impact this will have on aviation in southern California. There will be no impact on commercial flights—zero. Almost all commercial airlines already voluntarily abide by the voluntary curfew at Bob Hope, and the impact on general aviation will be limited to two nighttime landings. The impact, however, will be significant for people trying to get sleep that are disrupted by those small number of flights.

Mr. Chairman, I urge my colleagues to support this.

Mr. Chairman, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from southern California (Mr. SHERMAN), my colleague.

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman for putting forward this amendment.

Bob Hope is a local neighborhood airport. Only through a technicality was it denied a curfew. All the commercial carriers already adhere to that curfew. We have a handful of nighttime flights that could easily go through one of the larger airports in the Los Angeles area.

Mr. Chairman, this amendment is a good balance between the needs for commercial aviation on the one hand and the need to sleep on the other.

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Chairman, I just want to make one final point. This amendment had bipartisan support last year. It came within just three or four votes of passage. Because of the unique situation facing the Burbank Airport, I would urge unique consideration of correcting the injustice when Bob Hope was not grandfathered as it should have been.

Mr. Chairman, I urge support of the amendment, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. SCHIFF).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from California will be postponed.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. POSEY

Mr. POSEY. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. 416. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used by the Department of Transportation to authorize exempt facility bonds to finance passenger rail projects which do not use vehicles that are reasonably expected to be capable of attaining a maximum speed in excess of 150 miles per hour between scheduled stops as defined in section 142 of title 26, United States Code.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 287, the gentleman from Florida and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida.

Mr. POSEY. Mr. Chairman, exempt facility bonds are special tax-exempt financing instruments designed to help raise funds for important infrastructure projects like airports, waste management facilities, highways, and other transportation needs.

In fact our current law, 26 U.S.C. Section 142, clearly lists 15 specific categories of projects that can receive financing through the use of exempt facility bonds.

One area where the law restricts the ability of the Department of Transportation to authorize exempt facility bonds is to finance passenger rail, which it limits to high-speed rail that can reasonably attain the speed of 150 miles per hour between stops. Yet the Department of Transportation has decided to ignore the law and authorize bonds for projects that clearly do not qualify.

Whatever views Members have on passenger rail, my amendment would simply ensure that the Department of Transportation follows the law in authorizing the use of tax-exempt bonds, and I urge my colleagues to support this commonsense amendment.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Florida is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. All in Florida received a private activity bond allocation to issue these bonds. There is no provision in this particular section of U.S. Code that requires a passenger rail project to achieve 150 miles per hour. This amendment would prevent DOT from taking any potential further steps on this very, very important project. If for some reason, let's say the project needed a small extension, DOT could not process it.

Now, the passenger rail line that would link Miami to Orlando, frankly, is an important project to the State of Florida and one that I fully support, Mr. Chairman. We have to remember it is being done by the private sector. So I don't think that we should be looking at creating any unnecessary restrictions, any barriers or uncertainty for this project as it moves forward. It is a project—potentially, I think, the first of its kind in the country—where you have the private sector assuming most, if not almost all, of the risk. You have the private sector who is going to be involved in it. The numbers can't be made up, cooked or anything, because it is the private sector who is doing this and who will ultimately be held accountable by their shareholders.

Mr. Chairman, I respectfully ask for a ''no'' vote on this amendment, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. POSEY. Mr. Chairman, with all due respect, there is nothing in this amendment that adds any restrictive impediments whatsoever. It only requires that the Department of Transportation follow the law when they allocate these funds.

Although this is being called a private project, the taxpayers will be on the hook for over $1.7 billion—that is $1.7 billion. So I think it is important in the interests of protecting our taxpayers, certainly, that we make sure the Department of Transportation follows the law.

If there weren't a propensity already demonstrated not to follow the law, then I would not have to bother with this amendment. But it is clear there are some intentions to violate the provisions of the law and do things that they are not authorized to do. That is why I urge my colleagues to support this commonsense amendment to bring accountability and protect taxpayers for $1.7 billion.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Florida (Mr. POSEY).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Florida will be postponed.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. BLUMENAUER

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

At the end of the bill, before the short title, insert the following:

SEC. ____. The amount otherwise provided by this Act for necessary expenses for the ''Department of Transportation, Office of the Secretary, Salaries and Expenses'' is hereby reduced by $1.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 287, the gentleman from Oregon and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oregon.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Chairman, my heart goes out to the chairman and ranking member for the task that they have been given. People have appropriately condemned and opposed many of the provisions. As people dig into the bill, the more they see, the worse it looks: slashing TIGER grant funding, no funding for high-speed rail, cutting Amtrak, and overall reductions. No wonder it has drawn a veto threat. But it is definitely not the fault of the committee. They have been given an impossible task. They have been requested to finance the Federal Government's transportation responsibilities in 2015 with 1993 dollars.

Our country is falling apart while we are falling behind the rest of the world. We are of a generation when some of us can remember the United States having the finest infrastructure in the world. We had rail passenger service, airlines, superb highways and transit. Those days have long since passed. We are watching the deterioration of transit. The squabbling here over Amtrak is really dealing with a failing system because it is a symptom of our inability to invest in the future—just one, but a very glaring symbol.

Sadly, Mr. Chairman, in the 55 months that my Republican friends have taken over Congress, we have not had a single hearing in the Ways and Means Committee, on which I serve, for our responsibility for funding transportation. We have not increased the gas tax in 22 years.

Mr. Chairman, in the last 6 months, six Republican States have raised the gas tax, and we can't even have a hearing on a proposal that is supported by the U.S. Chamber, by the AFL–CIO, by the AAA, the truckers, contractors, transit, bicyclists, and everybody in between. As a result, we continue to limp along.

What did we do late last month? We extended the transportation funding for the 33rd time on a short-term basis. What country ever became great building its infrastructure 6 months at a time? We will be dealing with this in another 2 months.

Mr. Chairman, I would suggest that we deal with this bill as best we do, because it is not adequate. I am going to oppose it. But the bill is a symptom of the failure of my Republican colleagues to face what other entities have done, including red Republican States.

Why don't we come back next week and put the Ways and Means Committee to work for a week, inviting in the people who build, maintain, and use our infrastructure, listen to them, let the committee do its work, and come up with a proposal that will adequately fund our infrastructure?

□ 1115

Then we can have the authorizing committee not mess around with a couple of months' extension but get down

to work to fashion a 6-year, comprehensive transportation bill that will put hundreds of thousands of people to work in communities all across the country, making them more livable, making our families safer, healthier, and more economically secure.

We shouldn't be caught in this trap of our own making. Let's step up, invest in the future, and do our job.

Mr. Chair, I ask unanimous consent to withdraw my amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Oregon?

There was no objection.

The Acting CHAIR. The amendment is withdrawn.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. POSEY

Mr. POSEY. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. 416. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used by the Department of Transportation to make a loan in an amount that exceeds $600,000,000 under title V of the Railroad Revitalization and Regulatory Reform Act of 1976 (45 U.S.C. 821 et seq.).

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 287, the gentleman from Florida and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida.

Mr. POSEY. Mr. Chairman, the Railroad Rehabilitation & Improvement Financing program, or RRIF program, provides direct loans and loan guarantees to finance the development of railroad infrastructure. Under the program, the Federal Railroad Administration is authorized to provide direct loans and loan guarantees of up to $35 billion to finance development of railroad infrastructure.

Since 2002, the Federal Railroad Administration has made 35 loans which demonstrate the importance of this program to our Nation's railroads. No doubt about that. However, only five of these loans have ever met or exceeded $100 million. Two of those were to Amtrak. In fact, prior to this year, the largest RRIF loan ever made was to Amtrak in 2011 for $562 million.

My amendment ensures funds are spent responsibly on viable railroad projects and taxpayer risk is minimized by limiting loan amounts to $600 million.

I urge my colleagues to support my fiscally responsible amendment.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Mr. Chair, I claim the time in opposition.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Florida is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Mr. Chairman, this amendment prohibits the Department of Transportation from making a Railroad Rehabilitation & Improvement Financing loan that exceeds $600 million, as the chairman said.

Now, I know that $600 million, frankly, is a lot of money, and it sounds like a lot of money because it is; but when we are dealing with financing of railroad projects, it is just really not. This low loan ceiling is way too restrictive, and it would eliminate valuable projects, by the way, including some safety projects from being even considered for a loan. It has really far-reaching effects, and it could impact, frankly, every railroad entity in America. For example, there are railroads that are using this RRIF loan for positive train control—for positive train control.

So, again, it is unduly restrictive. I think it could have some far-reaching, negative effects. So I would respectfully ask for a ''no'' vote. I cannot support this amendment.

Mr. Chairman, I yield to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. PRICE).

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. Mr. Chairman, I thank the subcommittee chairman for yielding.

I simply want to underscore his opposition to this amendment. It would block Amtrak's loan request for $2.5 billion for new Acela high-speed train sets. This loan would make it possible to upgrade Amtrak's best and most profitable service, but one that is severely stressed.

We need to remind ourselves that the cars in which people died in Philadelphia were 40 years old. We desperately need the kind of investment that this loan would make possible. As the chairman has stressed, this may turn out to be the way that we can fund positive train control. It may be the only way, given other limitations in the bill, other limitations in Amtrak funding.

It would prevent loans that exceed $600 million for other purposes, including safety purposes. This is a very, very ill-advised amendment. I urge colleagues to reject it.

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. POSEY. Mr. Chairman, it has been said that this could be restrictive. Well, I just want to point out that never, ever before this year in the history of this program have they ever loaned $600 million under this program, and so I don't think it is unduly restrictive.

I mentioned discussing some other amendments, and I am staring down the barrel of taxpayers being on the hook for $1.7 billion on one program that clearly is not going to be able to repay the loan, so it is going to fall on the shoulders of the taxpayer.

I think it is just common sense that we take this measure on behalf of our honest, hard-working taxpayers at home. They work hard and play by the rules. I think we should respect that.

There are some people that just consider the Federal Government to be a big pinata, and everybody is going to take their whack at it and get all the goodies and the candy and the money that falls out of it, but this money has got to be paid back some day. We are not going to do it. We are not going to be around here to do it. It is going to be paid back by our children, and I think we need to act responsibly and think about their future.

I urge my colleagues to please support this commonsense amendment for better accountability in our government.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Florida (Mr. POSEY).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. POSEY. Mr. Chair, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Florida will be postponed.

The Committee will rise informally.

The Speaker pro tempore (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) assumed the chair.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate agreed to the following resolution:

S. RES. 191

In the Senate of the United States, June 3, 2015.

Whereas Joseph Robinette ''Beau'' Biden, III, born in Wilmington, Delaware and a graduate of the University of Pennsylvania and Syracuse University law school, served our country as an attorney in the Department of Justice for seven years, including assisting the nation of Kosovo in rebuilding their criminal justice system;

Whereas Beau Biden served his beloved State of Delaware for eight years as Attorney General;

Whereas Beau Biden joined the Army in 2003 at the age of 34, rose to the rank of major in the Delaware Army National Guard's Judge Advocate General Corps, deployed to Iraq in 2008 and received the Bronze Star for his service;

Whereas Beau Biden leaves behind a beloved wife, Hallie, and two children, Natalie and Hunter;

Whereas Beau Biden was the eldest son of the former Senator from Delaware and current Vice President of the United States and President of the United States Senate, Joseph Robinette Biden, Jr.: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate has heard with profound sorrow and deep regret the announcement of the untimely death of Joseph Robinette Biden, III.

Resolved, That the Secretary of the Senate communicate this resolution to the House of Representatives and transmit an enrolled copy thereof to the family of the Vice President of the United States.

The message also announced that the Senate has agreed to without amendment a concurrent resolution of he House of the following title:

H. Con. Res. 48. Concurrent resolution authorizing the use of Emancipation Hall in the Capitol Visitor Center for a ceremony to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Vietnam War.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Committee will resume its sitting.