

countries to justify military action. These include operations at Guantanamo Bay, warrantless wire tapping, and recent military actions in Libya, Syria, Somalia, Yemen, and many more. This report only looked at unclassified military actions. How many more military actions are happening without the knowledge of the American people?

In the 16 years since the AUMF was enacted, three Presidents have used this legislation to wage endless war; and as long as this AUMF stays on the books, any President will be able to use this blank check to wage war anywhere, anytime, in perpetuity.

I have been trying to end this AUMF for years, and this summer we got closer than ever before when the Appropriations Committee agreed, in a bipartisan vote, to adopt my amendment sunseting the AUMF—that is after 8 months upon signing of the legislation, not right away. It would take 8 months for it to sunset.

The 2001 resolution was passed in 3 days. Certainly, we can debate and vote on a new AUMF in 8 months. Members of both parties agreed at the time that it was time for Congress to debate and vote on a new AUMF, one that reflected the national security needs of 2017, not 2001.

But then my bipartisan amendment was stripped out of the bill in the dead of night by Speaker RYAN and the Republican leadership with no debate or vote in the Rules Committee. They just wiped it out, an over 326-page bill. It just vanished.

But here is the bottom line: Republicans want a new AUMF. So do Democrats.

So my question to the Speaker is: What is the holdup? Why have you not scheduled a debate on this vital national security issue? What, Speaker RYAN, are you afraid of? And also, why won't the President submit a new one?

In 2017, American servicemembers have been killed in Yemen, Somalia, Iraq, and Afghanistan. At what point will congressional leadership say enough is enough? How many young lives do we have to lose before Congress steps up to do its job? We owe this to our brave troops.

In 2001, when I opposed this authorization, I recalled the words of Reverend Nathan Baxter, dean of the National Cathedral. "As we act," he said, "let us not become the evil that we deplore."

RECOGNIZING PORTS-TO-PLAINS ALLIANCE

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

Mr. ARRINGTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate and recognize the Ports-to-Plains Alliance on 20 years of hard work to ensure a voice for rural communities in America's heartland and for educating others on the importance of building out infra-

structure around feeding, fueling, and clothing America's cities in urban areas.

Let me start by recognizing the hard work and the leadership of my dear friend and predecessor who left big shoes for me to fill, and that man is Randy Neugebauer, who is, in my mind, the father of this great initiative. And we in west Texas and up and down the backbone of this country owe him a debt of gratitude. I extend my deepest thanks and appreciation to Congressman Randy Neugebauer.

For those who aren't familiar, the Ports-to-Plains corridor runs north and south through the center of America's heartland, from my State of Texas to Montana, through New Mexico, Oklahoma, Kansas, Colorado, Nebraska, South Dakota, Wyoming, and North Dakota. It is strategically located to create jobs and increase economic efficiency by connecting rural areas to urban America, regional trade centers, and international transportation facilities.

Within the Ports-to-Plains service area, there are three congressionally designated corridors, high-priority transportation corridors, consisting of over 2,300 miles of highway and 38 million citizens.

The Ports-to-Plains region includes States that lead our Nation's energy economy, with 7 of the top 10 States in oil production and 8 of the top 10 States in wind energy generation, producing over \$44 million in agriculture goods, or about 22 percent of the United States' total production of agriculture.

The Ports-to-Plains corridor annually generates over \$166 billion in trade with Canada and Mexico, which is almost 20 percent of all U.S. North American trade.

The bottom line is: Middle America provides the food, fuel, and fiber that strengthens and protects our Nation, but that is only true when we can get the product to market. Unfortunately, nearly half of this region consists of two-lane, antiquated roads that cannot safely and reliably handle today's traffic demands, much less future traffic demands.

These roads were never designed to accommodate the kind of traffic and large trucks being used today, mainly by the energy and agriculture industries. The Ports-to-Plains Alliance, through its partnerships, has formed a strong voice for rural America promoting the importance of investing in its highway infrastructure.

I am honored to share the significance of this corridor and its needs by chairing the newly created Congressional Ports-to-Plains Caucus alongside—and this is a bipartisan effort—my House co-chairs Representatives SMITH, GONZALEZ, CUELLAR, and our counterparts in the Senate, Senators HEITKAMP and FISCHER.

If we are going to continue to feed and clothe the American people and fuel this great economy, we must make

the investment in our infrastructure, and we must make that investment in rural America. The return is incalculable, unmeasurable, unquantifiable, and we need to make that investment.

If you want to make America great again, support the people of rural America, support the products of rural America, and God help us support the values of rural America.

God bless America, and God bless America's beating heart in small towns all across this land.

IMPROVING AVIATION

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

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, there are groups proliferating across America who want to improve our system of aviation. Most people are not anxious to get on planes these days, given the conditions on the airplanes themselves, the treatment they get, the charges to put their bag in the overhead or sit on the aisle—all of these things. It has become quite an unpleasant experience. And then you have the aggravation of delays that ruin your trip, your business meeting, and sometimes your vacation.

Last week, I talked about the Citizens for On Time Flights. Now we have a new group, another new grassroots group. Imagine this. It is called Flyers for Fairness. Now they want to fix the system. Their fix is to privatize the largest, most complex, safest system of air traffic in the world.

They say that we are trapped in the 1950s using World War II radar. Well, that is not quite so true. Actually, it is not World War II radar. We are still using radar. However, we do have a system where we can fly planes closer together, more efficiently use the airspace, called ADS-B.

They would have us believe that somehow this thing is infinitely delayed and overbudget and not happening. Well, actually, we had a GAO report last week that said, actually, it is on budget and it is going very well and, in fact, it is operational.

Well, then why aren't we using it? Well, because the airlines, many of them flying older aircraft, do not want to upgrade their GPS systems. It is very expensive: \$200,000 per plane. We calculated it for American Airlines. To equip every plane in their fleet, it would cost them 40 percent of their baggage fees—40 percent of their baggage fees. Now, Wall Street wouldn't like that, so they don't want to make the investment.

Just like the airlines haven't invested in their reservations and dispatch systems which have repeatedly gone down, stranding, cumulatively, millions of people over the last 5 years, but they say they could do a better job running the air traffic system.

Well, actually, the statistics don't quite bear out the arguments of Citizens for On Time Flights, and Flyers