

Montgomery County, Pennsylvania, the 13th District of Pennsylvania, received a grant of \$665,000 to promote a transit-oriented development along a proposed rail line.

I would like to talk about that in some detail, but first it is clear to me in my travels around the district, in my town meetings and meetings at supermarkets, that the questions of suburban sprawl, of gridlocked traffic, of overdevelopment are the very highest issues facing the suburbs throughout this country and certainly the suburbs of Philadelphia. We need to do a better job in managing our growth, in fighting traffic gridlock, in fighting sprawl, in making sure we plan for the orderly growth and development in our suburban communities. These transportation grants are a very important way of doing that.

We are trying to restore train service that was stopped 15 years ago from the City of Philadelphia through Montgomery County, my district, out to Reading, Pennsylvania. This train service, if restored, would allow for both commuting into the city and reverse commuting from the city every day.

It would take shoppers to the largest mall on the East Coast. It would take shoppers to the Reading discount markets. It would allow access to cultural and historical benefits and assets, such as Valley Forge National Park. It would do a number of very beneficial things in my area.

The question is, why did passenger service end on this train route 15 years ago? Why was ridership so low? It is because we were not doing a very good job in promoting that service or making it attractive to people.

The Transportation Department, through its transit-oriented development grant, is trying to promote the expansion of this commuter service along what will be called the Schuylkill Valley Metro by urging municipalities to plan for adequate parking at train stations to allow dense development so that there can be residential opportunities and retail and commercial opportunities surrounding the proposed train stations. We need to make commuting by rail not only attractive to those who would drive to a station and park their car but to create an area where people would be attracted to come and live, to rent an apartment or buy a condo around a train station with all of the commercial amenities and recreational amenities that a small town can offer, so that people would be attracted to live there and drive their cars there as well, to use the transit program.

This is an exciting opportunity and one that we have to aggressively market if we are going to help reduce the traffic gridlock around Philadelphia and make people come back to trains and come back to a place of living and working, where they can walk to their train station from their apartment, they can walk to commercial and re-

tail opportunities. If they are driving to the train station from a more remote area, they can do shopping, they can drop off their dry cleaning or get their hair cut when they come back from work, whatever it takes to make life more manageable and more livable and improve the quality of life while, at the same time, getting people off of highways.

This is the goal. This sort of transit-oriented development encouraged by the Secretary of Transportation will help to fight sprawl in the suburbs. It will encourage smart growth strategies so that we can have a more livable community. It will ease traffic congestion and help to end some of the traffic gridlock that make our suburban areas so difficult.

And it would also encourage what is called location-efficient mortgages. This is an exciting aspect of this program that will encourage lenders to lend more money to folks that live in these transit areas because they will not need to have the high expense of owning a car that many Americans have to face. So if they can live in an area where they can walk to a train station and take the train to work, a lender will be encouraged to give more money in terms of a loan to that prospective homebuyer or condominium buyer so that he or she can buy more house for the same income than they would if they had to factor into their expenses the cost of owning two or three cars and living in a remote suburban community.

Fundamentally, this will reduce pressure on green space. It will allow us to save open space, preserve farmland and make all of the suburbs a more livable area for all of us.

So the transit-oriented development to be encouraged by this transportation grant is exactly the right sort of thing that we should be promoting to improve livability throughout the suburbs and throughout this country.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HOEFFEL. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on the subject of my special order today.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Pennsylvania?

There was no objection.

NATIONAL TAX FREEDOM DAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from South Dakota (Mr. THUNE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. Speaker, today is national Tax Freedom Day. That means that if you are an American taxpayer, every penny you have earned from January 1 through the end of your workday yesterday has gone to pay the cost of government. Today is the first day that the American taxpayer starts working for him or herself. Today is Tax Freedom Day.

Now, that is the good news. The bad news is that Tax Freedom Day falls later and later every year. This year Tax Freedom Day falls one day later than it did last year, which means the government has grown fast enough over the last year alone to take in one more 8-hour day of the American taxpayer's paycheck. That is wrong.

Now, a lot of people in this country do not think they need tax relief. They think, I do okay. I pay my bills. I take care of my family. They have most of the things they need. Well, I am here to tell you today that if you do not think your taxes are too high, you do not know how many times you have been paying your taxes.

I would like to walk you through the average American taxpayer's average American day just so that people in this country realize how much they are actually paying in the form of taxes.

It starts when the alarm goes off in the morning. You hit the alarm clock. You paid a sales tax on the alarm clock. As soon as you turn on the light, you are paying a utility tax. You walk in the bathroom, turn on the faucet to brush your teeth, or at least your co-workers hope you will, you pay a utility tax on the water. You go in to get ready to go to work. You put on your suit or your work clothes on which you paid a sales tax.

You drive to work. You grab your car keys. You probably paid some form of sales tax or excise tax on the car and on the tags and on the license that you need to drive it. You stop at the gas station to put gas in your car. You pay the gas tax every time you fill up at the pump.

You probably stop along the way somewhere to have a nutritious breakfast, maybe coffee and a doughnut, on which again you likely paid the sales tax.

You finally get to work. Here is where it really starts adding up. Because from the moment you walk in the door, every second of that 8-hour day is subject to the income tax. In fact, you will spend the next 2 hours and 51 minutes of your day working to pay taxes. That is more time than you spend working to pay for food, clothing and shelter combined.

But maybe it is your lucky day. Today could be payday. So you look at your pay stub and you see that Social Security, which you may never see depending on how old you are, and FICA and everything else is taken out. If you have enough left over you may go out pay your bills and buy your lunch somewhere, maybe at McDonald's again, on which you pay sales tax. You stop at the bank at the end of the day to deposit what is left of your paycheck in a savings account on which you will pay income tax on the interest.

Finally, you get home, your castle, on which you pay property tax. You say hello to your spouse and discover, of course, that even love is not free because when you got married you paid a hefty marriage penalty tax.

You decide to call your mother after dinner and find out how she might be doing. You pay a utility tax when you use the phone.

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Finally it is your time. It is time to relax, sit down. So you kick up, turn on Sportscenter to see how your favorite team might be doing.

In our case in South Dakota it happens to be the Minnesota Twins. Mr. Speaker, they are in last place. If that were not bad enough, you had to pay a cable tax to find out that information.

Finally, the day ends back where it began, as you lay down on your bed, close your eyes and go to sleep. And guess what? Just on the chance that you do not wake up before the morning you get hit one last time by the government; yes, with the death tax.

Now this is sort of a humorous way of looking at this issue, but there is a very serious message here, and that is the tax burden on the average American has grown every year, and Tax Freedom Day now falls 11 days later than it did back in 1993. In South Dakota we do a little bit better. Our Tax Freedom Day comes on May 2, which is about a week earlier than the Nation Tax Freedom Day, but it still is not right to spend more than 4 months of every year working for someone other than yourself.

South Dakotans know how to spend their money, they know what their family and their community needs, and they ought to be allowed to keep more of the income that they earn to spend it on the things that they need most. Maybe that is the children's education, maybe it is to make a down payment on a house, a farm or a ranch, or maybe it is time to trade in the old car and get a new one. Maybe it is time to invest in a favorite charity or perhaps church, and maybe it is time for you or your spouse just to cut down on some of the hours or quit working altogether and spend more time at home with the children.

The point is, Mr. Speaker, that it is the American people's money, and they should be spending it according to what is in their best interests.

We cut taxes in 1997 for the first time since 1981. We need to do it again. People of this country work hard, they need to keep more of what they earn, and every time they send money to Washington they are giving up power and control. Mr. Speaker, we want to see that the power and control stays at home with the American family, with the individual and with the community.

Mr. Speaker, I hope that we can work in a very deliberate way to bring about additional tax relief for hard-working Americans.

LIVABILITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. REYNOLDS). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. HOLT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, since World War II, the American dream has been a house in the suburbs. But in many places in our country, that dream is turning into a nightmare—traffic, air pollution, lost farms and parks and higher taxes.

Suburban sprawl is one of the fastest growing threats to America's environment as prime farmland is replaced with malls, parking lots and housing developments.

Unplanned suburban growth means increased traffic jams, costlier public services, wasted tax revenue and increased pollution.

Most importantly, it means a deteriorating quality of life for ourselves and our neighbors.

How do we explain to our children that their neighborhood wasn't always housing developments and shopping malls? And how many hours with family have been lost in traffic? How far do we have to drive to see and enjoy open, naturally preserved acres?

We need to change the way cities think about growth and plan their development.

It is for those reasons that I support the Transportation and Community and System Preservation Pilot program, otherwise known as TCSP. The TCSP program was created by the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century. It is an initiative consisting of research and grants that to communities as they work to solve interrelated problems involving transportation, land development, environmental protection, public safety, and economic development.

Of the 35 projects selected from an initial pool of 524 applications, two grants were awarded to New Jersey. One project in Northern New Jersey will prepare modern intermodal freight infrastructure to support brownfield economic redevelopment. The completed plan will address needed transportation access to brownfield sites and effectively market the sites for freight related activities. In addition, it will provide new employment opportunities for residents, reduce the volume of trucks on regional roads, and safeguard the environment.

The second project, Transit-friendly Communities for New Jersey, will work with diverse community partners to develop specific ways that New Jersey towns can become more "transit friendly." By building on both New Jersey Transit's initiatives to make train stations themselves "passenger friendly" and on statewide "smart growth" initiatives to reduce sprawl, we can encourage new development within walking distance of transit stations. It also allows New Jersey Transit leverage the resources of its non-profit and government partners to shape the future of communities around transit stations well into the future.

The results will be models for other New Jersey communities to follow in future projects. In addition, the project will ensure that communities understand how transportation investments can enhance the environment, create strong downtown centers, and improve quality of life. Moreover, New Jersey Transit is committed to using the process developed under this program as a way to change innovative efforts from "pilot projects" to "the way we always do business." With its diversity of station types and communities, this program will be a model for the nation.

By funding innovative activities at the neighborhood, local, metropolitan, state, and regional level, the TCSP program will increase our knowledge of the costs and benefits of different approaches to integrating transportation

investments with community preservation efforts, land development patterns, and environmental protection.

These strategies will help New Jersey grow according to their best values by: improving the efficiency of the transportation system; reducing environmental impacts of transportation; reducing the need for costly future public infrastructure investments; ensuring efficient access to jobs, services, and centers of trade; and examining private sector developmental patterns and investments that support these goals.

The reason for this initiative is clear.

Across America, we are discovering that livable communities—places with a high quality of life—are more economically competitive communities.

The way we build and develop determines whether economic growth comes at the expense of community and family life, or enhances it.

By helping communities pursue smart growth through initiatives such as the TCSP program, we can build a better America for our children.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. DAVIS of Illinois addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

CLEVELAND AREA PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS THAT DEAL WITH MAKING OUR COMMUNITIES LIVABLE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Ohio (Mrs. JONES) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. JONES of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join my colleagues in speaking in support of livable community initiatives.

I represent Ohio's 11th Congressional District that consists of both urban and suburban areas. Creating areas all citizens can enjoy is important. I believe we must not sacrifice our environment for expansion or destroy that which is already in place when we can utilize our spaces better.

I would like to discuss several programs and projects in my district that deal with making our communities livable:

The first program is in a small suburb of Cleveland called Woodmere Village. Woodmere is a small, predominantly African American community. Today the main thoroughfare in the village is Chagrin Boulevard, a busy two-lane road. Chagrin Boulevard, or Kinsman Road, as it was originally known, has long been a center for commerce with restaurants and stores, places like Gino's Jewelry and Trophy and Tuscany Gourmet Foods are examples of businesses that draw people from all over the greater Cleveland area.

It is really wonderful for the Cleveland area to have such a vital route in