

Mr. REYNOLDS. Mr. Speaker, for purposes of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. HALL), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of the resolution, all time is yielded for the purpose of debate only.

Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 299 is a standard rule providing for consideration of the conference report to accompany H.R. 2299, the Department of Transportation and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2002.

The rule waives all points of order against the conference report and against its consideration.

Additionally, the rule provides that the conference report shall be considered as read.

Mr. Speaker, the Committee on Appropriations has once again produced bipartisan legislation that meets the Nation's transportation priorities. Ensuring the safety and efficiency of our transportation networks is one of the Federal Government's highest responsibilities.

This conference report represents a sound commitment to our Nation's transportation infrastructure by devoting funds to critical programs such as air traffic control modernization, airport improvement grants, motor carrier safety, and increasing the investments in highway safety research.

The bill enhances the safety and capacity of the aviation system and the highway and rail networks.

The bill provides a total of nearly \$59.6 billion, a 2.5 percent increase, in total budgetary resources for our Nation's infrastructure and transportation safety, including the Federal Aviation Administration, transit program spending, the United States Coast Guard, and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

The Federal Aviation Administration will receive a 4.5 percent increase in funds, \$292 million of which is for aviation security, including bomb detection systems and compliance test activities. It makes available \$3.3 billion for the airport improvement program, an increase of \$100 million over the current fiscal year. This money includes \$20 million to support the expansion of service at smaller airports.

This bill, much like last year's, continues to improve and enhance motor carrier safety and operations by providing \$335 million. Of this total, about \$140 million is devoted to facilities and operations necessary to open the U.S.-Mexican border for commercial motor vehicle traffic. Not only will this allow for the free flow of trade between the United States and Mexico, but it instills a modest system of safety checks to maintain the integrity of our American borders.

Another significant piece of the transportation appropriations funding is for the drug interdiction activities carried out by the United States Coast Guard. The bill includes \$636 million for the Coast Guard's capital needs and

\$320 million that is available to initiate the Deepwater program, which will fight the scourge of illicit drugs, provide support for offshore research and rescue, and work to protect Americans and American shores.

Moreover, the bill meets the funding obligation limitations in the transportation legislation known as TEA-21, the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st century. These programs are critical to improvements and modernization of our roadways and our airways, providing desperately-needed funds across the Nation.

In addition, the bill provides \$521 million for Amtrak's capital needs. This funding will cover capital expenses and preventative maintenance. The bill sustains the Federal commitment to continue its partnership with Amtrak to help it reach its goal of self-sufficiency by December of 2002.

Mr. Speaker, this is a responsible conference report that tackles our Nation's most pressing transportation needs. In the midst of the holiday travel season and in light of the recent attacks on our Nation, this Congress can take pride in the fact that the underlying legislation represents an increase in the safety measures and resources in every area of our transportation system.

With airline security stabilization legislation already signed into law, this conference report expands on the new measures and provides the necessary resources to carry out much-needed safety initiatives.

Now more than ever, safety should remain the Federal Government's highest responsibility in the transportation area. Clearly, whether by land, by sea or by air, this bill addresses those needs and concerns, while maintaining the fiscal discipline that has been the hallmark of this Congress.

Mr. Speaker, as I conclude I would like to commend the chairman of the Committee on Appropriations, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. YOUNG), and the ranking member, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY), for their tenacious work on this measure.

I would also like to extend praise to the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. ROGERS), the chairman of the Subcommittee on Transportation of the Committee on Appropriations, and the ranking member, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. SABO).

I also urge my colleagues to support this straightforward, noncontroversial rule, as well as the underlying legislation.

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

Mr. HALL of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, this rule allows for the consideration of the conference report on H.R. 2299. This is a bill that funds the Department of Transportation, the National Transportation Safety Board, and related agencies. The rule waives all points of order against the conference report.

Since the terrorist attacks against the United States on September 11, our Nation's transportation systems have been under great scrutiny. In particular, Federal oversight of aviation has been in the spotlight. However, the transportation agencies which monitor our railroads, highways, and waterways have also been challenged to find solutions to the terrorist threat.

The bill funds the newly created Transportation Security Administration, which will be responsible for security operations involving all modes of transportation. This is the Federal agency that will oversee the hiring and training and supervising of the airport passenger and baggage screeners.

The bill also funds aviation security in the Federal Aviation Administration, which includes bomb detection systems. The conference report contains compromise language intended to ensure the safety of Mexican trucks traveling on U.S. highways.

I am also pleased that the conference report provides \$1 million towards the construction of the Interstate 70-75 interchange in Montgomery County, Ohio. This will help cover unforeseen increased costs of the project, which is an important priority for the community and the State.

This will be the ninth of the regular appropriation bills to complete the conference process. We are now 2 months into the fiscal year and we still have 4 more to go.

I would urge my colleagues to approve the rule and the underlying bill and let us get this bill to the President to sign.

Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. REYNOLDS. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The previous question was ordered.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on the conference report accompanying H.R. 2299 and that I may include tabular and extraneous material.

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

There was no objection.

#### CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 2299, DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2002

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. Pursuant to House Resolution 299, Mr. Speaker, I call up the conference report on the bill (H.R. 2299) making appropriations