

was when he first arrived, young teenager alone, wearing jeans, not maroon robes. Looking for his birth family, an education and his American self. He found his dear wife—they understood too well both tragedy and exile. They courageously trusted each other, shared love and pain and family, and the struggle for human rights in Tibet.

It was the spring of 1999 when I met Wangchuk. He was impressive, knowledgeable. We were just a group of people interested in Tibet who gathered to share ideas. We formed an alliance, the Boston Tibet Network (BTN) to share information and be able to act on it. Present were Tibetan Buddhists, folks from Amnesty, a scholar archivist of Tibetan Buddhist texts, a Harvard professor, those interested in Tibet, in Buddhism, in social justice. All concerned about the well being of Tibetans in Tibet and those in exile, about human rights and non-violent action. The network still exists, we now know each other well and continue to work toward the same goals.

A few months after our first meetings, Wangchuk went to Tibet. He went in August to investigate, see what was happening to the nomads in Amdo at the hands of the Chinese. He was outstandingly brave to do this. He knew there was danger. The Tibetan movement had learned that the World Bank, contrary to their own mandate, had financed Chinese population resettlement. Tibet supporters worldwide protested loudly with marches and more. Bowing to international pressure, the Chinese government said all were welcome to visit and explore their nomad resettlement project which they claimed was beneficial; yet the pattern was set—the Chinese were perpetually hard about all things Tibetan. Wangchuk was one of those who decided to take them at their word and go and see their project.

Once there Wangchuk was quickly captured by the Chinese, questioned and tortured. Despairing of ever being released, he jumped from a window trying to escape. He was seriously injured and held in a nearby hospital by the Chinese.

For BTN our first group action was to announce the terrible news that Wangchuk was imprisoned. We begged the Chinese government to release him and lobbied our own government to assist in freeing him. The Chinese made his release difficult, so Wangchuk's wife Phuntsok and their friend, Carl, went to China to get him. A harrowing experience but finally they returned to the states and he was admitted to Brigham and Womens' Hospital for a long stay.

August of 1999, Wangchuk's imprisonment, his subsequent injuries and release, world protests—all this was a pivotal moment for the Tibetan movement. The World Bank relented to demands and stopped the funding to the Chinese for nomad resettlement in Amdo. The Tibetan movement was energized and Tibet supporters became a strongly united grass roots movement that has continued to grow powerful all these years since.

Wangchuk was heroic to go to Amdo. He was brave when he endured the endless surgeries needed to rebuild his shattered feet. He was generous to write his autobiography "Comes the Peace" and share his personal life, thoughts and feelings. He was happy with his wife and their boutique "Karma" where they shared workdays and he told stories to friends and shoppers, and enjoyed his Newton Center community.

Yes, it hurts that he is not with us anymore, and that he chose to leave us. But I am

so grateful to have known Wangchuk, he was a hero. Such an honest man, he took my breath away. He is remembered well.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JOHN LEWIS

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 29, 2010

Mr. LEWIS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, on July 28, 2010 I was unable to cast rollcall votes 476 through 482. Had I been here I would have cast the following votes: on rollcall No. 476, I would have voted "yes"; on rollcall No. 477, I would have voted "yes"; on rollcall No. 478, I would have voted "yes"; on rollcall No. 479, I would have voted "no"; on rollcall No. 480, I would have voted "no"; on rollcall No. 481, I would have voted "no"; on rollcall No. 482, I would have voted "yes."

TRANSPORTATION, HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2011

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 29, 2010

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 5850) making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2011, and for other purposes:

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Mr. Chair, I rise in support of H.R. 5850, the "Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act of 2011." This bill includes important funding and necessary investments in our transportation, housing and other critical aspects of this country's infrastructure. This bill also provides assistance to the most vulnerable Americans, including the homeless, disabled, low-income and elderly. Additionally, this bill provides support for our veterans who serve this nation so valiantly and who have earned a right to adequate housing.

Mr. Chair, this bill includes funding for critical transportation projects that will improve mobility and stimulate economic activity in communities across the country. What I am particularly proud of is the funding for two light rail lines in Houston, Texas—the North and Southeast lines. These projects have successfully gone through the Federal Transit Administration's New Starts review process, and I am looking forward to passage of this bill and funding of these projects. As the fourth largest city in the country, we are anxiously awaiting construction of an integrated rail network that will create jobs, provide mobility and spur economic development. Funding for these projects will be a significant step towards achieving our goals.

This bill also invests in National Infrastructure to Support Jobs. It includes funding for:

Highway infrastructure

There is \$45.2 billion in the bill to improve and repair our nation's aging highway infrastructure. It is estimated that this increased investment will support more than 142,000 additional jobs across all sectors of the economy, according to the job model developed by the Department of Transportation (DOT). According to the DOT's 2008 Conditions and Performance Report, an average annual investment of \$105.6 billion from all levels of government is needed just to sustain the current conditions of our highways and bridges, and \$174.6 billion is needed to improve our current system. In addition, the report of the National Surface Transportation Policy and Revenue Study Commission issued in December 2007 recommended investing \$225 billion annually over the next 50 years to maintain, upgrade, and expand our transportation networks.

Public Transportation Investments

There is also \$11.3 billion to support bus and rail projects, including capital expenditures. The increase from last year will support an estimated 20,000 additional jobs for transit workers around the country. The Federal Transit Administration estimates that our nation's public transportation system has a state-of-good-repair backlog of nearly \$78 billion.

Public Housing Capital Fund

Additionally, the bill includes \$2.5 billion to help Public Housing Authorities make critical repairs and improvements to public housing units and improve living conditions for residents, including green and sustainable rehabilitation. Every dollar invested in the Capital Fund produces \$2.12 in economic return for local economies.

HOPE VI

The bill also includes \$200 million for grants to rehabilitate distressed public housing neighborhoods by transforming them into sustainable mixed-income communities. This transformation will help create jobs in the hard-hit construction industry and will revitalize distressed neighborhoods.

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)

In addition, the bill provides for \$4.35 billion to spur local construction and development. The CDBG program works to ensure decent affordable housing, to provide services to the most vulnerable in our communities, and to create jobs through the expansion and retention of businesses. CDBG helps local governments tackle serious challenges facing their communities and makes a difference in the lives of millions of people across the nation.

Passenger Rail Grant Program

Also included in the bill is \$1.4 billion to expand and improve intercity passenger rail and develop a robust national high speed rail system, which will create jobs and reinvigorate our manufacturing base. Additionally, this investment will help reduce our dependence on fossil fuels and decrease congestion between cities across the country