

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BILL HUIZENGA

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 12, 2012

Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan. Mr. Speaker on rollcall No. 381, I was absent due to personal reasons.

Had I been present, I would have voted "aye."

TRANSPORTATION, HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2013

SPEECH OF

HON. C.A. DUTCH RUPPERSBERGER

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 26, 2012

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 5972) making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2013, and for other purposes:

Mr. RUPPERSBERGER. Mr. Chair, I rise to note a provision in H.R. 5972, the Transportation-HUD Appropriations legislation for FY2013 which appears to have been accepted with virtually no debate and contains even less merit.

H.R. 5972 contains a provision redirecting funds from the Maglev Deployment Program to other programs. Section 154 reads—

SEC. 154. The unobligated balance of funds provided under sections 1101(a)(18) and 1307 of Public Law 109–59 shall be used for the elimination of hazards at railway highway crossings described in section 104(d)(2) of title 23, United States Code, to remain available until expended.

In a statement in support of this amendment, the claim was made that these "unobligated funds" were somehow lying dormant on the projects they were intended to support. In my opinion, and weighing the available facts, that was not an accurate statement. While one may sympathize with the need for safe grade crossings, the United States already has a well funded program to meet these needs.

The Maglev Deployment Program (MDP) was authorized for far different purposes—to promote leading-edge high speed rail/technologies. And as is the case with all major multistate undertakings, the planning processes that precede construction take time and coordination to complete. Under the Federal Railroad Administration's program for the MDP, a feasibility study must have been completed, followed by detailed environmental re-

view—either a full-scale Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) or a phased approach, requiring a Tier 1 EIS followed by a Tier 2 EIS.

Anyone who has observed the NEPA process knows that it sometimes proceeds in fits-and-starts. And even if it appears that at times not much is happening, these detailed planning phases sometimes take years to accomplish. The funds in question date to SAFETEA-LU, passed in 2005, and the SAFETEA-LU Technical Corrections, passed in 2008.

As the result of these two statutes, the Federal Railroad Administration issued a Notice of Funds Availability or NOFA, in 2008, inviting applications for a portion of these funds. Applications were due in early 2009. Several projects applied competitively, and the Administration deliberated carefully over the applications. Two projects which had applied were awarded funds; the Atlanta-Chattanooga and Pittsburgh projects.

The FRA advised a third project applicant, a route from Baltimore to Washington, DC, that there was a deficiency in Maryland state law that prevented FRA from awarding funds. Far from standing still, my State of Maryland worked to cure that deficiency, and last year repealed the offending section of its state law, with the Governor's support. Since then, various stakeholders have been working with the Congress to ensure that SAFETEA-LU provisions were carried over in the Surface Transportation reauthorization legislation, which was passed by a bipartisan vote in the House after a conference with the Senate. Thus, I am pleased to report my understanding that the Maglev Program was preserved, and, in fact, maglev was specifically advanced in various sections of H.R. 4348, Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century, or "MAP-21".

We can understand from this congressional action that there remains broad support for the program, its promise for the future, and the need for our nation to pursue, not curtail, next generation high speed rail technology. The remaining projects, I am told, have been striving in good faith to complete their required planning phases. Indeed, one project has been working with the FRA to obligate its funds even as Congress voted to approve the MAP-21 conference report.

Mr. Chair, the Congress as a whole authorized and funded the Maglev Deployment Program in 1998 and 2005 and 2008. My State of Maryland competed successfully to become one of the original seven maglev programs, and then on the basis of the merits of our Feasibility Study, one of two projects was down-selected for further work. We are pledged to continuing that work, and have acted in our state in the good-faith knowledge that those funds were secure.

For that reason, I would like to urge the sponsors of the relevant language to look elsewhere for funds for their initiatives, and I stand ready to work with the leadership of the House and of the Committee to return the

MDP funds to their historic purpose, to help build infrastructure and to promote economic revitalization.

IN REMEMBRANCE OF NORA EPHRON

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 12, 2012

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Nora Ephron, an iconic journalist, novelist, playwright, screenwriter, actress, director, and producer.

Nora was born into a Jewish family in New York City on May 19, 1941. She spent most of her childhood in Beverly Hills, California with her parents, who were also screenwriters, and her three younger sisters. Nora graduated from Wellesley College in Massachusetts in 1962 with a degree in political science.

Nora's many talents, in addition to her unique personality, equipped her for a long and very successful career that included a variety of roles. She began as an intern in the Kennedy White House upon graduation from college. Nora then moved to New York where she was a columnist and essayist for major newspaper publications including The New York Post and The New York Times Magazine. Nora later enjoyed success in the film industry. Some of her most famous films include hits such as When Harry Met Sally (1989), Sleepless in Seattle (1993), and You've Got Mail (1998), all of which were nominated for major awards. Recently, in 2009, Nora was the writer, director, and producer of the film Julie and Julia, fulfilling three of the roles traditionally not held by women in Hollywood. In addition to her ambitious career, Nora was the mother of two children, Jacob and Max Bernstein.

She will be greatly missed by those who knew her, as well as by all who enjoyed reading her work and watching her films.

Mr. Speaker and colleagues, please join me in honoring Nora Ephron, a woman who contributed invaluable works of literature and film during her lifetime and set an example for women everywhere.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 12, 2012

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 454 on H.R. 5892, I am not recorded because I was absent due to a weather delay.

Had I been present, I would have voted "aye."

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.