

transit trust fund bill. Unfortunately, instead of working on a big infrastructure bill, last month Congress passed a mere 2-month extension, an extension that gets us no further in repairing our Nation's crumbling infrastructure.

Mr. Speaker, my constituents are fed up with more delays instead of real action on road funding. No city and no State is going to move forward on major projects because Congress extended this fund by 60 days.

No more temporary extensions. No more delays. Let's get to work on a bipartisan, long-term plan to invest in our Nation's roads, our bridges, and our ports. We have to believe in ourselves. We have to bet on the American worker and on American business. If we invest in infrastructure, they will pay us back with productivity.

#### RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 3 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 2 o'clock and 6 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1500

#### AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. COLLINS of New York) at 3 p.m.

#### ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote incurs objection under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken later.

#### AUTHORIZING EARLY REPAYMENT OF CONSTRUCTION COSTS TO BUREAU OF RECLAMATION

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 404) to authorize early repayment of obligations to the Bureau of Reclamation within the Northport Irrigation District in the State of Nebraska.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 404

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

#### SECTION 1. EARLY REPAYMENT OF CONSTRUCTION COSTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding section 213 of the Reclamation Reform Act of 1982 (43 U.S.C. 390mm), any landowner within the Northport Irrigation District in the State of Nebraska (referred to in this section as the

“District”) may repay, at any time, the construction costs of project facilities allocated to the landowner's land within the District.

(b) APPLICABILITY OF FULL-COST PRICING LIMITATIONS.—On discharge, in full, of the obligation for repayment of all construction costs described in subsection (a) that are allocated to all land the landowner owns in the District in question, the parcels of land shall not be subject to the ownership and full-cost pricing limitations under Federal reclamation law (the Act of June 17, 1902, 32 Stat. 388, chapter 1093), and Acts supplemental to and amendatory of that Act (43 U.S.C. 371 et seq.), including the Reclamation Reform Act of 1982 (13 U.S.C. 390aa et seq.).

(c) CERTIFICATION.—On request of a landowner that has repaid, in full, the construction costs described in subsection (a), the Secretary of the Interior shall provide to the landowner a certificate described in section 213(b)(1) of the Reclamation Reform Act of 1982 (43 U.S.C. 390mm(b)(1)).

(d) EFFECT.—Nothing in this section—

(1) modifies any contractual rights under, or amends or reopens, the reclamation contract between the District and the United States; or

(2) modifies any rights, obligations, or relationships between the District and landowners in the District under Nebraska State law.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Utah (Mr. BISHOP) and the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. BEYER) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Utah.

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on the bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

As we begin the debate on this particular bill, I am pleased that the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. SMITH) is here with us to introduce this very effective and important bill.

I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. SMITH) to explain his legislation.

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. I thank my colleague from Utah for yielding.

Under Federal reclamation law, irrigation districts which receive water from a Bureau of Reclamation facility typically repay their portion of the capital costs of water projects under long-term contracts.

Under its current contract and current law, Northport is exempt from annual capital repayment if this carriage fee exceeds \$8,000 per year. Given that the carriage fee has greatly exceeded this amount every year since the 1950s, Northport's capital repayment debt has been stagnant at over \$923,000 since 1952.

So long as the debt endures, landowners are subject to burdensome reporting requirements and acreage limi-

tations, and no leverage is generated for the Federal Government.

I introduced this bill to provide members of the Northport Irrigation District early repayment authority under their dated reclamation contract.

Allowing producers within the Northport Irrigation District to pay off their portion of the contract means the government will receive funds otherwise uncollected, and landowners will be relieved of costly constraints which threaten family-owned operations.

For example, at a Water, Power, and Oceans Subcommittee hearing last year, one member of the Northport district testified that acreage limitations will prohibit parents who own land in the district from passing down or even selling farmland to sons and daughters who also own land in the same district.

As the chairman mentioned, similar legislation has passed under bipartisan majorities and, according to the CBO, could generate as much as \$440,000 in Federal revenue.

This is a very simple bill which would make a big difference to some family farmers in western Nebraska.

Mr. BEYER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 404 would authorize landowners served by the Northport Irrigation District to prepay the remaining portion of construction costs allocated to them for the North Platte project. In exchange, the landowners who pay will no longer be subject to acreage limitations and other requirements associated with the Reclamation Reform Act.

I ask my colleagues to join me in support of this good bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

This bill is an excellent piece of legislation that solves a problem that should never have existed in the first place.

It is curious that in many cases throughout the West, the current Federal law does not allow a landowner to make an early repayment on Federal irrigation projects. It is an outdated law and a hurdle that is silly. It is similar to a bank prohibiting a homeowner from paying off his or her mortgage early.

Congressman SMITH's bill removes the Federal Bureau of Reclamation repayment prohibition for individual landowners within the Northport Irrigation District. In return for those payments, though, these farmers will no longer be subject to the acreage limitation and the paperwork requirements imposed by the Reclamation Reform Act.

This bill will accelerate revenue coming into the Treasury. It is based on two recent precedents that passed in both Republican- and Democrat-controlled Houses. Today, we are trying to continue those efforts by adopting this particular bill.