

position in which he served for 8 terms. In the Texas Legislature, Ed was a leader on issues of law enforcement, education, environmental protection, and creating economic opportunity, and he served several terms as Chairman of the Harris County Delegation. Currently he is a Community Liaison on my congressional staff in Pasadena and Deer Park, Texas.

Ed is a charter member of the Deer Park Chamber of Commerce and a charter member of the Lions Club. He served fourteen years as a volunteer fireman and is now one of six honorary members. He has been actively involved in the Wheel House, a 30-day alcohol rehabilitation facility, since 1954 and serves on their board of directors. Ed visits daily, reaching out to the residents, solving problems when they arise, and fundraising.

Ed also serves on the board of directors of the Interfaith Helping Hands Ministry. He also volunteers his time at First Baptist Church, serving on the Benevolence Committee and reaching out to people not only in the church, but in the community as well. Because of his caring ways, Ed was named Dear Park Citizen of the Year in 1987. With Jerry, Ed also works with the Interfaith Helping Hands Ministry and she has served on the Bereavement Committee at First Baptist Church many times.

In all that he has done, Ed Watson has been a leader, organizer, and innovator. Known for his activism and leadership in both politics and public service, his legacy will be remembered by the community and to the many who have benefited from his good deeds.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to recognize Ed Watson on the occasion of his 80th birthday and to commend him on a lifetime of achievement. I join Ed's family and friends and all those he has inspired in honoring him on this occasion. May the coming years bring good health, happiness, and time to enjoy his grandchildren and great grandchildren.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
RULEMAKING PROCESS
NEEDS A JUMP START

HON. JAMES L. OBERSTAR

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 20, 2000

Mr. OBERSTAR. Mr. Speaker, the Department of Transportation's Office of the Inspector General today released the results of a study, done at my request, of the Department's rulemaking process. The IG's report conforms what many of us involved in transportation policy have suspected, that the DOT is doing a poor job meeting rulemaking deadlines.

According to the report, DOT is taking, on average, twice as long to issue rules as it did just six years ago. The report compares the number of significant rules completed in 1999, and the average time it complete each process, with corresponding figures from 1993. The results are not encouraging. In 1993, the department issued 45 rules and took an average of 1.8 years to complete work on each; in 1999, the department issued 20 new rules

after working an average of 3.8 years on each. In other words, DOT is taking twice as long to do half as much.

The study further shows that the Office of the Secretary is the slowest among the operating administrations in the department, taking an average of 6.6 years in 1999 to complete action on proposed rules. In 1993 the Secretary's office took an average of 4.4 years. The office issued the same number of rules—three—in 1993 and 1999.

The Federal Aviation Administration showed the most significant drop in rulemaking productivity in the study. In 1993, the FAA issued 17 significant rules and took an average of eight to nine months (0.7 years) to complete the process. In 1999, the FAA issued only three rules, and took an average of three years to finish work on each, four times as long to complete less than one-sixth the workload.

Only the Federal Railroad Administration and the Federal Transit Administration showed improvement in the average time to complete rulemaking between 1993 and 1999. However, the FRA issued only two rules in each of the two years studied, and FTA issued two rules in 1993 and one rule in 1999.

The report goes on to say that the department routinely misses statutory deadlines for issuing rules. The report shows that the DOT's record was poor in 1993 and has improved only marginally since then. In 1993, the department completed only 12 of 29 rules mandated by Congress (41.4 percent) and completed only four of the 29 by the mandated deadline (13.8 percent). In 1999, the department completed 21 of 43 such rules (48.8 percent) and met the deadline on 10 of them (23.2 percent). This is a dismal record.

The IG's report cites several reasons for these delays. In the case of Congressionally mandated rules, work is often delayed by a disagreement between Congress and the department over the content of the rule. The complexity of the rulemaking process also contributes to the problem. However, the report cites poor management by the modal administrators as a significant contributor to the lack of progress on new rules.

In its analysis of 54 completed rulemakings, the study that found rules languished an average of two years on the modal administrator's desk with no action taken. The report said in many cases the rulemaking process stalled because the administrator would not make a decision on whether a rule should advance or be terminated, did not consider the rule a priority, or waited for future events, such as the development of new technology, that would affect the rule.

When the modal administrator considers a rulemaking to be a priority, the process can move quickly. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration took less than one year to produce a rule providing grants to states with a legal blood alcohol limit of 0.08. Yet, NHTSA still has not completed action on a rule on the flammability of materials on school buses after working on it for 11 years. The report states that NHTSA has wanted to terminate the rule, but the Federal Transit Administration and the Deputy Secretary opposed terminating it. Even though the Deputy Secretary charged NHTSA to work with FTA to work out

their differences, NHTSA has not worked on the rule for the past three years.

These rules affect public safety—children on school buses, passengers in airplanes, ships at sea, motorists at rail crossings, neighborhoods near gas pipelines. We cannot allow bureaucratic gridlock to put people's lives at risk.

To its credit, the DOT, according to this report, has accepted the IG's findings and is taking steps to improve its management of the rulemaking process.

I have discussed this matter with Sec. Rodney Slater and urged him to use these remaining months to take significant action to reduce or eliminate this backlog of pending rules and provide a clean slate for the next administration.

I am very pleased with Sec. Slater's firm commitment to follow through and press the modal administrators to put the rule making process into high gear.

In doing so, the Secretary can show the American people that government can work efficiently, can be responsive to their concerns, and can adopt the same attitude of compliance that it demands of the private sector it regulates.

TRIBUTE TO DAUNE WEISS,
BUERGERMEISTER FOR THE
GAYLORD, MICHIGAN, ALPEN-
FEST 2000

HON. BART STUPAK

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 20, 2000

Mr. STUPAK. Mr. Speaker, I would like to call your attention to a unique celebration in Gaylord, a small city in my northern Michigan district. The event is called Alpenfest, and over its 35 year history it has come to serve many purposes in Gaylord. Alpenfest is the community's major celebration, providing a broad range of family entertainment. Alpenfest spotlights the unique architectural heritage of Gaylord, where strict zoning codes require downtown businesses to conform to an Alpine motif. Perhaps most important for my remarks today, Mr. Speaker, Alpenfest provides an annual setting to name a community Buergermeister, an honorary mayor.

Daune Weiss, a Gaylord businesswoman and a close, personal friend, has received this honor for the year 2000. The local paper, the Gaylord Herald Times, describes this honor as the equivalent of being named the Citizen of the Year for Gaylord and Otsego County, and I can think of no person in the community more worthy of this special recognition to begin the new millennium.

Daune, a native of Upper Michigan, left the area but later returned. It's perhaps typical of Daune's view of her own contributions that she feels her 14 years of commitment to the local community don't measure up against those who have spent their lives here. A brief review of her accomplishments, a detailed in the Gaylord Herald Times, makes clear, however, that Gaylord has found one of its greatest friends.

The owner of the local Holiday Inn, Daune established a Wish Tree, helping to fulfill