CONGRESSIONAL RECORD—HOUSE

June 26, 2001

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. Mr. Chairman, I am very pleased to present to the House the Department of Transportation and related agencies appropriations bill for fiscal year 2002. This is an excellent bill that reflects not only the priorities of the budget submitted by the President earlier this year but also the important contributions of all the Members of our subcommittee and full committee and we hope now the full House.

I want to especially thank the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. SABO) for his tireless and insightful support of transportation programs during the many hours of our hearings, deliberations, and the markup of this bill this year. I also want to thank both the gentleman from Florida (Mr. YOUNG), the full committee chairman; and the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBETZ), the ranking member of the full committee, for their support of this subcommittee and the programs we oversee. I am also thankful to all the members of our subcommittee who had a part in the drafting of this bill and the full committee on Appropriations. I hope now the full House.

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In this bill we are doing everything possible to make sure the money is there for work and technologies that address the problem. If we find programs and initiatives that will hopefully lead to reductions in the number and severity of airline delays. Our gridlocked aviation system has been a major focus of this subcommittee, and it will continue to receive the scrutiny of our panel until we untangle it for the good of all Americans and the aviation industry.

This bill is within our 302(b) allocation, in both budget authority and outlays. It fully funds the highway and aviation spending increases established by TEA-21 and AIR-21, and it will help relieve the congestion that is frustrating citizens on our interstate highways, in our skies, and in our bus and train terminals.

Our bill fully funds the Coast Guard’s operating budget and provides $600 million, which is a huge increase, in their capital account. Within the capital appropriation section, we provide $500 million to kick off the Deepwater program, which will provide a vitally needed upgrade and replacement of the Coast Guard’s ships and aircraft. Members should know that this is the largest acquisition program, that is the Deepwater program in the Coast Guard’s history. The Deepwater program is the Coast Guard’s esthetic and replacement of the existing ships and aircraft come to serve the needs of our nation’s ports and our coastline.

The bill also includes, Mr. Chairman, funds to address serious staffing, training, and equipment problems at our small-boat stations of the Coast Guard which were highlighted in our hearings with the Inspector General and the Coast Guard this year. I am proud that we will find a small amount of money to raise the staffing levels and the training at these stations which provide the backbone of our Nation’s search and rescue capability. With an average workweek, Mr. Chairman, of 80 hours plus, Coast Guardsmen at these stations are in desperate need of some help. We provide it in this bill.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2002

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

There was no objection.

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for the consideration of the bill, H.R. 2299.

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for the consideration of the bill, H.R. 2299, making appropriations for the Department of Transportation and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2002, and for other purposes, with Mr. CAMP in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The Chairman. Pursuant to the rule, the bill is considered as having been read the first time.

Under the rule, the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. ROGERS) and the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. SABO) each will control 30 minutes.

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.