

Secure cargo, safe skies

Protecting American transportation



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It's time to stop pumping the brakes on autonomous vehicles



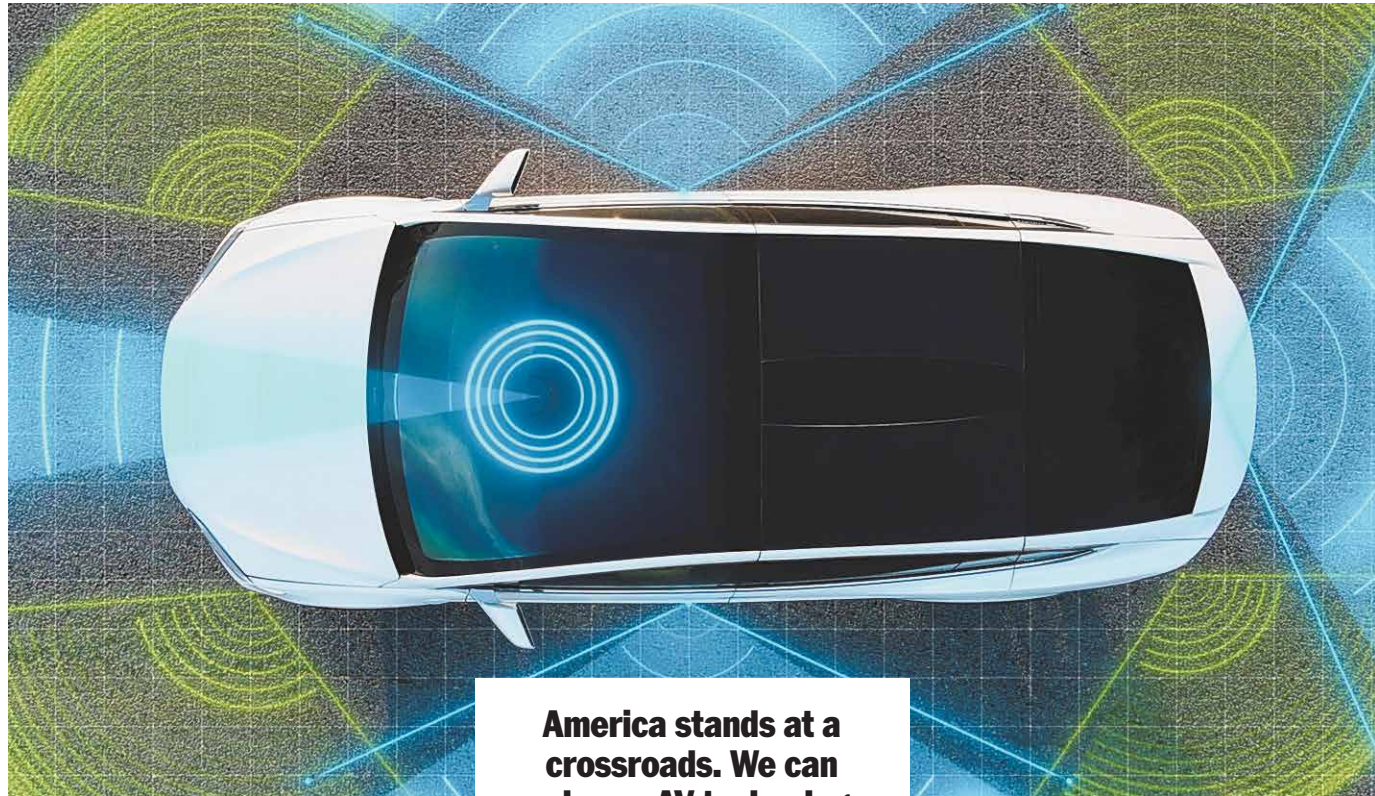
By U.S. Sen. Cynthia Lummis,
R-Wyoming

American innovation thrives when bold entrepreneurs challenge perceived limits. From the assembly line that transformed manufacturing to the internet that revolutionized commerce, our greatest technological leaps have happened when visionaries refused to accept the status quo. We are a nation of innovators, and in order to maintain that reputation, we must embrace the bold, new frontier of autonomous vehicles (AVs) that promise to fundamentally transform transportation, enhance safety, and secure America's competitive edge for generations to come.

Autonomous vehicles mean autonomous people; they can completely transform the way we view transportation. Consider the extra hours gained for leisure and productivity during the daily commute or reclaimed family time in the car during long vacation drives. Americans with disabilities gain newfound mobility. Seniors enjoy more freedom and independence. Areas without public transportation systems become increasingly accessible. AVs can revolutionize freight and shipping with more options and lower costs. The list goes on.

More than 40,000 Americans lose their lives each year in traffic accidents, with human error accounting for the vast majority of these tragedies. Fortunately, early AV deployments show significantly lower accident rates than human-operated vehicles in comparable conditions. The technology to reduce these preventable deaths dramatically exists today. Outdated regulations that presume a human driver have stalled real breakthroughs in both widespread adoption and next-generation vehicles.

While American companies



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America stands at a crossroads. We can embrace AV technology through thoughtful regulations we set ourselves and maintain our leadership in automotive innovation, or we can take a passive stance and let other nation's capture the markets and manufacturing jobs that come with technological leadership.

pioneered AV technology and maintain current leadership, our international competitors are closing the gap. Countries that once looked to Detroit for automotive leadership now see an opportunity in America's hesitation. Most notably, China has ramped up its AV programs, ushering in legitimate questions about what threat AVs manufactured by the Chinese Communist Party could pose to our national security.

The economic implications are also staggering. America's automotive sector employs millions of workers and pumps hundreds of billions of dollars into our economy annually. AVs represent the next phase of this vital sector, one that could either strengthen American manufacturing leadership or, if we fumble, drive lucrative production overseas to greener pastures.

Wyoming's geography uniquely equips our state to exploit AV's potential. Our expansive highways, weather patterns, low population density, and lighter traffic loads create ideal conditions for developing and testing self-driving technology. Rural states could serve as proving grounds for systems that can endure extreme conditions and transport people across longer distances.

In 2016, a U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) report identified over 30 vehicle regulations that presume a human driver. Automotive regulations require manufacturers to include a steering wheel and brake pedals, specify mirror locations and seating

configurations, among other things. These requirements severely restrict vehicle design, even though they are obviously superfluous in an AV. The laws and regulations have changed little in a decade. This must end.

Last month I introduced the Autonomous Vehicle Acceleration Act. My legislation requires DOT to update these regulations so the United States can move forward with commercial scale deployment of AVs. Safety is also paramount, and the bill keeps that front and center. By requiring DOT to address specific barriers identified in its own report, we can jumpstart advancement without compromising safety standards. The goal is not to rush untested technology to market, but to break through administrative inertia.

Additionally, my bill recognizes that regulatory fixes alone will not usher in

a new era of transportation. The bill requires DOT to craft a roadmap for the future for commercial scale AV Level 4 and Level 5 autonomous systems — vehicles requiring minimal to no human intervention. The roadmap does not prescribe a particular technology or approach but would lay out all the practical considerations involved in achieving it. Importantly, American industry drives the innovation, not Washington, D.C.

America stands at a crossroads. We can embrace AV technology through thoughtful regulations we set ourselves and maintain our leadership in automotive innovation, or we can take a passive stance and let other nation's capture the markets and manufacturing jobs that come with technological leadership.

Are we still the nation that seizes transformative opportunities, or have we become too risk-averse to embrace this new frontier of uncharted transportation advancement? The AV movement will not wait for our regulatory agencies to catch up. History will judge whether we chose to embrace progress or paralysis when the future of transportation beckoned. Let's ensure we choose wisely.

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Sen. Cynthia Lummis was sworn into the Senate in 2021, becoming the first woman U.S. Senator from Wyoming. She serves on the Transportation and Infrastructure subcommittee of the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works and on the Senate Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee.



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Smarter transportation policies will put America in the driver's seat



By Chris Jahn

President Trump has laid out an ambitious vision for America's future — one that prioritizes onshoring manufacturing, strengthening trade, and revitalizing our economy. But to realize this vision, we must address a critical, often overlooked piece of the puzzle: transportation.

For the chemical industry, transportation isn't just a logistical concern; it's a lifeline. Our industry depends on all modes of transportation to bring in raw materials and deliver finished products to virtually every part of the economy. Last year alone, more than one billion tons of chemical products moved across the country, supporting everything from microchips and cars to medicines and

energy — all the things we depend on every day.

If we want to make more in America and lead in global trade, we must do a better job moving American-made goods, including chemistry. In fact, a recent survey conducted by Morning Consult for the American Chemistry Council found that more than three-quarters of Americans agree that the

common-sense policies that have bipartisan support in Congress.

First, we must untangle the tracks. The Surface Transportation Board (STB), created nearly 30 years ago, was designed to ensure fair, reliable, and competitive freight rail service. But today, its policies are too often complex, burdensome, and out of step with the needs of today's challenges and

President Donald Trump has a golden opportunity to lead where others have fallen short. By removing regulatory barriers and embracing smarter transportation policies, we can strengthen our supply chains, grow our economy, and make America a manufacturing superpower.

chemical industry is essential to the U.S. being able to compete with other countries. In fact, they want growing chemical production here at home to be a priority. That means we must modernize our transportation policies to match the pace and scale of today's economy.

Any good golfer knows that you must have the right clubs in the bag to navigate a challenging course. To boost our transportation network, the Administration needs to be equipped with smarter and better policies.

Unfortunately, many of our current policies are outdated, inefficient, and in some cases, actively holding us back. But there's a path forward — and it starts with looking at several

the needs of shippers. The bipartisan Reliable Rail Service Act, sponsored by Senators Tammy Baldwin, D-Wis., and Roger Marshall, R-Kansas, offers a promising foundation for reform by clarifying and enforcing railroads' common carrier obligation to provide reliable service to their customers.

In addition, the STB must modernize its regulations to provide more American manufacturers access to more than one railroad. A competitive marketplace is the cornerstone for a stronger freight rail network. It's time to give American producers the competitive and reliable rail service they need to succeed and reduce our country's dependence on imports.

Second, we need to tap into the full

potential of trucking. Updating federal truck weight standards on interstate highways is a commonsense step that would allow us to move more goods with fewer trucks—reducing congestion, emissions, and infrastructure wear and tear. The SHIP IT Act, championed by Representatives Dusty Johnson, R-S.D., and Jim Costa, D-Calif., in the last Congress, includes thoughtful proposals that could be used to safely increase truck capacity and help address supply chain challenges.

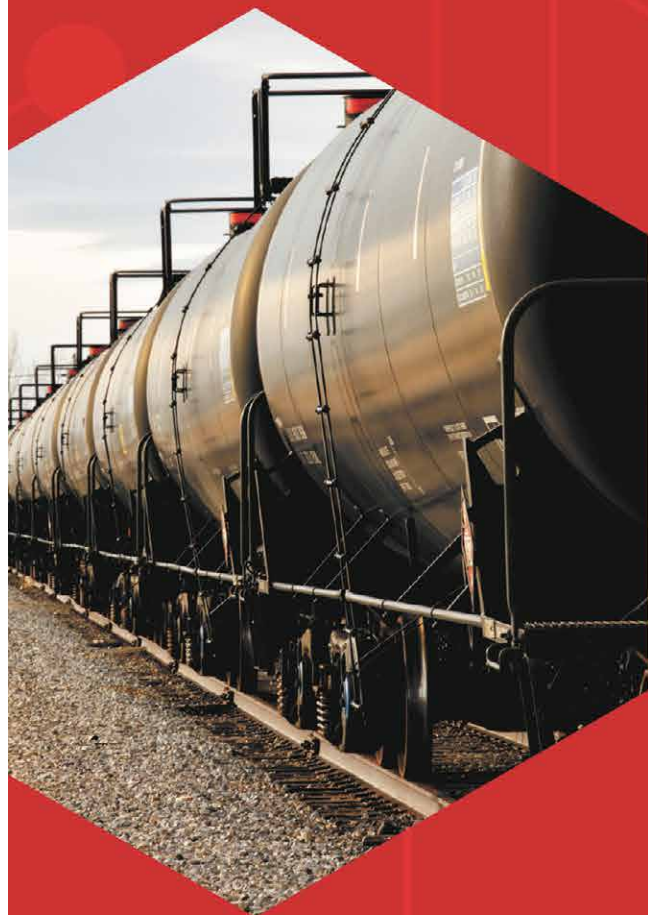
Fixing these issues is an economic imperative and essential to putting American manufacturing in the driver's seat when it comes to competing with the rest of the world.

President Donald Trump has a golden opportunity to lead where others have fallen short. By removing regulatory barriers and embracing smarter transportation policies, we can strengthen our supply chains, grow our economy, and make America a manufacturing superpower.

Let's equip our economy with the right transportation policies to compete—and win—on the global stage.

When chemistry creates, America competes. Learn more here about how the American Chemistry Council is helping build a stronger, more affordable nation.

Chris Jahn is president and CEO of the American Chemistry Council. For more insights on how American success relies on American chemistry, follow Chris on LinkedIn and @JahnChris on X.

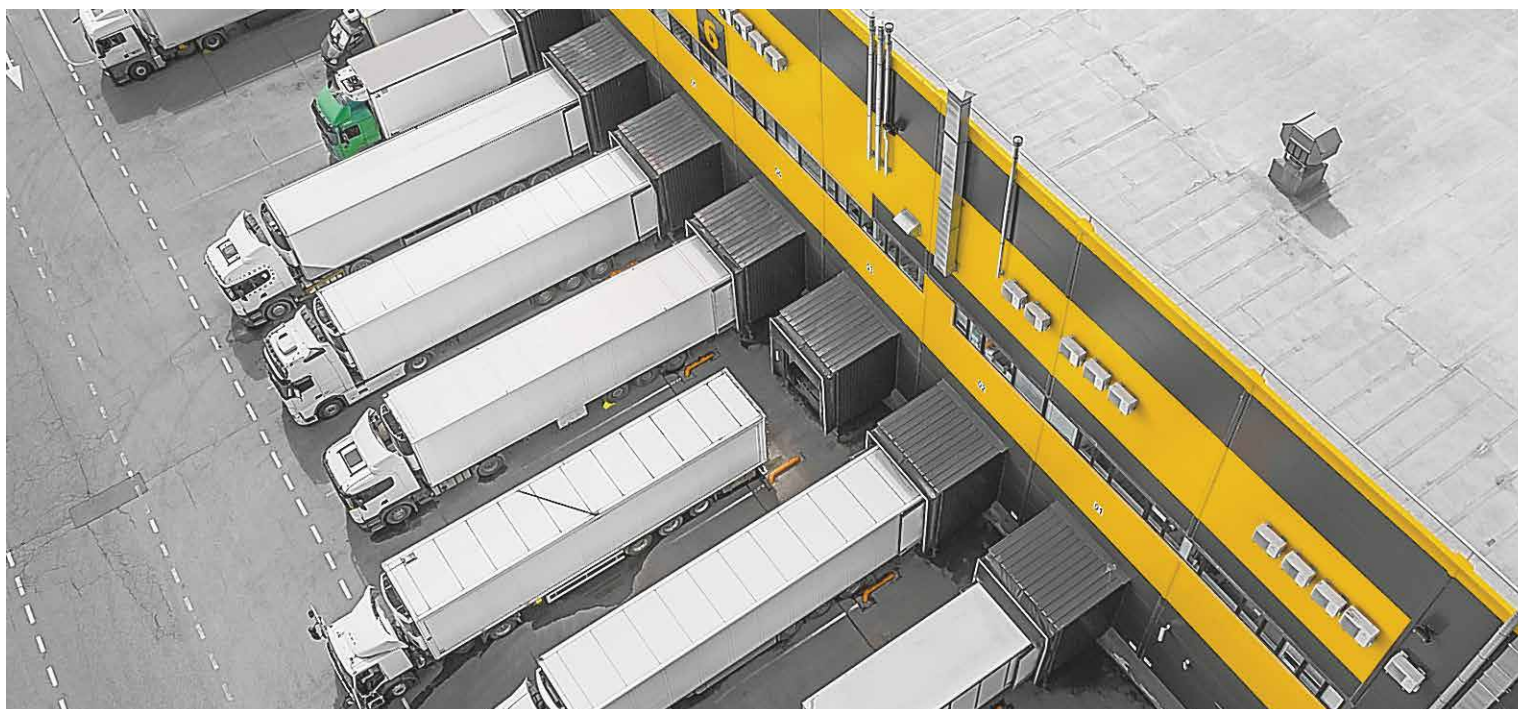


Onshoring manufacturing, strengthening trade, and boosting U.S. leadership—it all depends on smarter transportation policies that help move American-made chemistry.



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Cargo theft is a growing national security issue



By U.S. Sen. Todd Young, R-Ind.

In October 2024, PFL Logistics – a third-party logistics company based in Evansville, Ind. – lost \$60,000 due to a stolen shipment.

Scheduled for delivery using a previously trusted carrier, the shipment was proceeding as normal until communication with the carrier completely stopped. The cargo was never delivered.

As PFL tried to figure out what happened to the shipment, it was forced to absorb a significant loss for a business of its size.

Unfortunately, this story is not unique to PFL. Cargo theft is on the rise across the country, threatening our supply chains and hurting American businesses and consumers.

The term “cargo theft” encompasses all large-scale theft operations targeting the shipping and cargo industries. Since 2020, cargo theft has surged across the country, reaching a decade high by

some calculations.

With the rise of e-commerce, this crime domain includes sophisticated domestic and international groups from places like China, Eastern Europe, and Mexico. I’ve learned that these criminals not only hijack trucks and rob rail cars but also exploit vulnerabilities in the online ecosystem. They often concoct elaborate and fraudulent schemes to deceive businesses and other third parties and steal or hold their cargo hostage.

Homeland Security Investigations estimates that the annual loss from cargo theft accounts is \$15-35 billion annually, with these costs ultimately being shouldered by customers when retailers are forced to raise prices to recover losses.

Transnational groups are using complex tactics and technology to target high-value goods to steal and finance illegal activities like drug smuggling. And, because cargo theft takes so many forms – from spoofing and fictitious pickups to phishing and identity theft – this crime is hard to spot and stop, enabling repeat offenders.

Homeland Security Investigations estimates that the annual loss from cargo theft accounts is \$15-35 billion annually, with these costs ultimately being shouldered by customers when retailers are forced to raise prices to recover losses.

The stories of companies like PFL, along with this data, paint a clear picture of a very real problem that is affecting too many American businesses, disrupting our supply chains, hurting

consumers, and threatening our national and economic security.

With most crimes, there are protocols, technologies, and support systems designed to target and alleviate criminal activity. But with what our country has seen in the increase in cargo theft, clearly something is missing.

The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, which is responsible for regulating motor carriers, does not have adequate protections to identify fraudulent actors or remove them from

towards this goal, as stakeholders were able to provide critical insight to policymakers and open doors to additional conversations.

The hearing also brought forth several ideas, including the need to examine and reconcile potential catalysts that allow criminals to steal cargo, modernize and implement safeguards for businesses and consumers, and ensure our law enforcement agencies are adequately prepared and equipped to respond to reports of wrongdoing. At the end of the day, we learned that, to effectively combat this evolving threat, we must tackle it from multiple angles. And, because this crime is often committed by transnational groups, we also must prioritize our national security, including securing our border.

Congress should use this insight to work with federal agencies like the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, the Federal Trade Commission, and the Department of Homeland Security on ways to stop these criminal enterprises from hurting our businesses, consumers, and American supply chains.

Ultimately, eliminating cargo theft will require an “all hands on deck” approach that involves Congress, federal agencies, local law enforcement, and the private sector. We must come together to stop these criminals that are hurting our supply chains and threatening our national security.

Sen. Todd Young has represented Indiana in the Senate since 2017. He serves on the U.S. Senate Committees on Finance; Commerce, Science & Transportation; Small Business and Entrepreneurship; and the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence.

its system. Nor does the agency have the statutory authority to assess civil penalties for violations of its safety or commercial regulations. At the state level, cargo theft is underreported and often miscategorized as a simple property crime.

As chairman of the Senate Commerce Subcommittee that oversees this issue, I believe there is a path for Congress and federal agencies to better partner with the private sector like shipping companies or marketplaces to reduce cargo theft and the sale of stolen goods. In February, we held a hearing focused on the rise in cargo theft and examined potential solutions to target these criminals and protect our law-abiding businesses and consumers.

Our hearing was a great first step



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Back to basics: Let's build America's critical surface transportation infrastructure



By U.S. Rep. Sam Graves, R-Mo.

Every June, we celebrate the anniversary of President Eisenhower signing the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1956. This landmark legislation authorized the construction of 41,000 miles of the Interstate Highway System. Eisenhower strongly believed that the Allied victory in World War II was aided by Europe's sophisticated highway system, and he recognized that an interstate system was essential for economic growth, national defense, and everyday efficient transportation.

When the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1956 was signed into law, it represented the most significant investment in American transportation to date and resulted in a monumental achievement in American building.

Since 1956, Congress has been responsible for the regular reauthorization of our surface transportation programs. Our

limited federal resources should always be focused on moving people and goods safely and efficiently. Unfortunately, at the hands of the Biden Administration, efforts to address infrastructure needs were diluted in favor of progressive political wants and initiatives. Money designated for infrastructure improvements was coupled with a hefty list of unrelated liberal mandates. These types of additional requirements can increase project costs and lead to delays. There are no Democratic roads or Republican bridges, and our surface transportation system needs to be safe, efficient, and absent of burdensome requirements.

In the next surface transportation reauthorization bill, we're going back to basics. After recent years of expanding

from all over the country, we must maintain and expand flexibility on how these important programs function. States are the best judge of their unique transportation and infrastructure needs. Flexibility is especially important for states like my home state of Missouri, which has many rural communities. We need to continue to empower states and limit federal intrusion.

We can also help address our infrastructure needs through permitting reform. Federal permitting requirements have made it entirely too difficult to get projects done on time and within budget. One previous analysis estimated that 20 to 30 percent of infrastructure project costs were wasted on red tape. We must streamline the project review process.

There are no Democratic roads or Republican bridges, and our surface transportation system needs to be safe, efficient, and absent of burdensome requirements.

and creating more programs, spending money we don't have, and losing money to project approval inefficiencies, we can and must focus on our most fundamental infrastructure needs.

The current surface transportation measure expires on September 30, 2026, and the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee has already begun the process of crafting the next bill. As part of that process, we held several hearings earlier this year on different aspects of the transportation system that will be covered in the upcoming legislation. In talking with constituencies representing viewpoints

using less gasoline, or none, in the case of electric vehicles (EVs), meaning that they're not keeping up their end of the bargain in a user-pays system.

Since 2001, spending from the HTF has simply exceeded its revenues. That's why we need to find a more sustainable solution that maintains the conservative user-pays principle. Under my leadership, the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee has already taken steps to do just that. During the budget reconciliation process, the House approved a \$250 annual registration fee on EVs and \$100 annual fee on hybrids. These new, more equitable user fees would represent the first new funding stream into the Highway Trust Fund in over 30 years and ensure that everyone pays into the Trust Fund. Fixing the HTF is long overdue, and Congress must tackle this growing problem.

Next year will mark 70 years since President Eisenhower signed the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1956. Although our transportation needs have grown and evolved over the last seven decades, one thing has remained fundamentally true: America is a nation that builds. We need to get back to building, and that starts with legislation focused specifically on improving our roads, bridges, and other surface transportation infrastructure.

Rep. Sam Graves represents Missouri's 6th congressional district and serves as the chairman of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee. Under his tenure, the committee has passed legislation such as the FAA Reauthorization Act and the Water Resources Development Act. Rep. Graves is also a member of the House Armed Services Committee.



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Travel leadership arrives in Washington — not a moment too soon



By Geoff Freeman

For too long, America's travel systems have been pushed to the brink — burdened by outdated technology, staffing shortages and inefficient screening. These persistent issues threaten safety, reliability and efficiency. Urgent reform from Washington has been long overdue.

That's finally starting to change.

With leadership from President Donald Trump, Transportation Secretary Sean Duffy and Congress, the U.S. is confronting these significant challenges head-on. These leaders are pushing to modernize air travel safety, upgrade airport technology and deliver much needed improvements that will benefit millions of American travelers.

A top priority is modernizing America's air traffic control system. Secretary Duffy has unveiled a bold, tech-driven plan to replace aging systems

and deliver a more seamless, secure and efficient experience. Congress is advancing legislation to help make this vision a reality.

And Washington's leadership couldn't come at a better time.

Travel — by road, air, or rail — is vital to America's economy and way of life. It connects families, fuels business and drives growth in communities. In 2024 alone, travel spending injected over \$1.3 trillion into the U.S. economy, supported 15 million American jobs — nearly 1 in 10 workers — and generated \$190 billion in tax revenue, saving each U.S. household nearly \$1,500.

All travelers, whether domestic or international, directly support American businesses and workers by spending on hotels, restaurants, retail, transportation, entertainment and more.

Travel is a cornerstone of the American economy — but to keep growing, it must thrive. The U.S. is still the world's premier travel destination, yet international visitation hasn't bounced back to pre-pandemic levels, despite being one of America's top exports — bigger than steel, aluminum and even aircraft.

Reclaiming America's global travel leadership is essential, and the time to act is now. The U.S. stands on the brink of a once-in-a-generation opportunity to showcase America. Over the next four years, the U.S. will host a mega-decade of global events — including the FIFA World Cup in 2026, America's 250th birthday, and the 2028 Summer Olympics — expected to attract 40 million

travelers and generate nearly \$100 billion in spending. But these events aren't just international draws, they're pivotal domestic travel opportunities to explore iconic destinations and reconnect with our nation's history.

All travelers, whether domestic or international, directly support American businesses and workers by spending on hotels, restaurants, retail, transportation, entertainment and more.

President Trump has pledged his full support to ensuring the success of these historic events. He's established White House task forces for America 250 and the FIFA World Cup to coordinate

larger liquids, keep electronics and IDs in bags, and keep shoes, jackets and belts on.

- **Modernizing airport customs and borders:** Building a smarter, faster process — our most advanced since Global Entry.
- **Strengthening the visitor visa policy:** Implementing a streamlined, visitor-friendly process.

Congress is now considering many of the Commission's recommendations, but we must act urgently or risk falling further behind. Saudi Arabia is investing \$1 trillion to boost its travel infrastructure and attract 100 million visitors. China and India are expanding and modernizing airports. Meanwhile, the U.S. has gone from a \$50 billion travel trade surplus to a \$50 billion deficit. Every 1% drop in visitor spending costs \$1.8 billion in lost revenue for American businesses — and widens that deficit.

This should be a wake-up call. Reclaiming global travel leadership, strengthening our economy and making American travel the best in the world must be national priorities. President Trump, Secretary Duffy, and Congress recognize what's at stake, and are already taking long-overdue action. But to fully seize this moment, we must urgently advance the Commission's reforms. Doing so will deliver a world-class travel experience and unlock major economic benefits for American workers, businesses and communities across the country.

Geoff Freeman is president and CEO of the U.S. Travel Association. To learn more, visit ShowcaseAmericanTravel.org.

across federal agencies. They've already convened their first meeting, an important step in America's readiness efforts.

But to truly seize this moment, the U.S. must urgently modernize the travel experience. That's why U.S. Travel convened the Commission on Seamless and Secure Travel, a group of top experts tasked with identifying and eliminating bottlenecks across the air travel system. Their report covers every step of the journey — from curb to gate and back — and lays out a roadmap to make travel both more seamless and secure, including:

- **Delivering the biggest aviation security upgrade since TSA Pre-Check:** Allowing travelers to bring

American Travel Leadership Has Arrived

Thank you, President Trump and Secretary Duffy

Your leadership is transforming the American travel experience—modernizing our air traffic control system, strengthening air travel safety and efficiency, and preparing the U.S. for major moments like the World Cup and America 250.

We're grateful for your commitment to making the country a global travel leader. Together, we can advance this vision by:

- **Investing in a comprehensive upgrade to our air traffic control system:** Addressing chronic shortages of air traffic controllers and updating antiquated technology systems
- **Delivering the biggest aviation security upgrade since TSA PreCheck:** Allowing travelers to bring larger liquids, keep electronics and IDs in bags, and keep shoes, jackets and belts on
- **Modernizing airport customs and borders:** Building a smarter, faster process—our most advanced since Global Entry
- **Strengthening the visitor visa policy:** Implementing a streamlined, visitor-friendly process

With your continued leadership, we can make American travel the best in the world—and grow this \$1.3 trillion U.S. industry.



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Unleash American innovation: Lift the ban on supersonic flight



By U.S. Rep. Troy E. Nehls,
R-Texas

The supersonic aviation race is this generation's space race. To ensure America remains the world's leader in supersonic aviation, President Donald J. Trump signed an executive order that ensures the United States is the world's leader in supersonic aviation.

This executive order initiates the repeal of a 1973 Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) regulation that prohibits civil supersonic flights over land in the United States. 14 CFR § 91.817 dictates that no person may operate a civil aircraft in the United States at a speed of Mach 1 or higher, effectively prohibiting non-military-related supersonic flight over the United States. By taking action

to eliminate this restrictive red tape, the Trump administration is ensuring that America's aviation industry remains strategically competitive against our foreign adversaries.

Chinese state-owned Comac is already making strides to develop a supersonic jet called the C949. While Comac revealed its blueprints for its supersonic jet in March 2025, American companies, such as Boom Super-

sonic Aviation Modernization (SAM) Act, which would direct the FAA to issue or revise regulations, within one year of enactment, to allow for the operation of civil aviation aircraft to operate at speeds of Mach 1 or higher without requiring special authorization, so long as no sonic boom reaches the ground.

My legislation codifies this important provision in President Trump's

My legislation codifies this important provision in President Trump's executive order to ensure that outdated regulations don't hinder the Golden Age of American air travel. Congress must supersonically pass my legislation and send it to President Trump's desk to then sign into law.

sonic, have already developed aircraft designed to fly faster than the speed of sound, with no sonic boom reaching the ground.

The United States of America is home to the only flying civil supersonic aircraft. Boom's supersonic demonstrator, XB-1, broke the sound barrier six times earlier this year — without exhibiting an audible sonic boom. This revolutionary innovation will help maintain America's competitiveness on the world stage, all the while protecting the safety of the flying public and civilians on American soil.

Before President Trump's executive order, I joined my Senate colleague, Sen. Ted Budd, R-N.C., in introducing

executive order to ensure that outdated regulations don't hinder the Golden Age of American air travel. Congress must supersonically pass my legislation and send it to President Trump's desk to then sign into law.

I am proud to serve as the House Aviation Subcommittee Chairman for the 119th Congress. Following the devastating DCA plane crash, which took the lives of 67 individuals, my subcommittee has held several hearings evaluating the current state of our nation's aviation operations, including our nation's air traffic control system, staffing, and the implementation of the FAA Reauthorization Act of 2024.

Further, the House Transportation

and Infrastructure Committee's portion of the One Big Beautiful Bill Act includes a \$12.5 billion investment in our ATC system. This investment provides a significant down payment to modernize the system and make our ATC system the envy of the world.

Furthermore, as chairman of the House Subcommittee on Aviation, I am hosting multiple, bipartisan roundtables that allow key stakeholders from across the aviation industry to share their perspectives and provide valuable insights on the issues currently facing America's aviation industry.

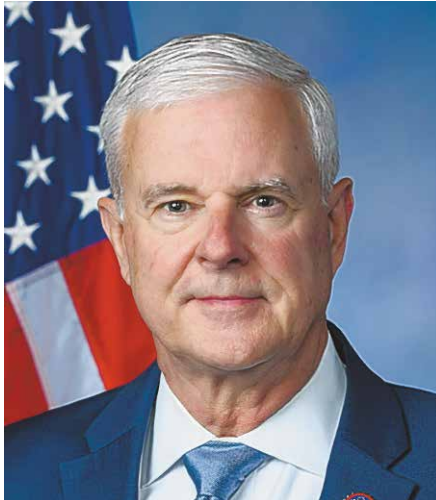
Let me be clear: Safety remains our top priority. But now, thanks to the leadership of President Trump, we have an opportunity to usher in a new age of American-made aviation innovation that we can't let pass us by.

We must seize this moment and encourage and support further innovation in the aviation industry while not compromising safety.

By lifting the ban on supersonic flight, we are ensuring America will remain the world's leader in the aviation industry.

Rep. Troy E. Nehls represents the 22nd Congressional District of Texas. In the 119th Congress, Rep. Nehls serves as the chairman of the House Aviation Subcommittee. He previously served as the chairman of the House Railroads, Pipelines, and Hazardous Materials Subcommittee. Prior to serving in Congress, Rep. Nehls served in law enforcement for nearly 30 years.

We must make room for rigs



By U.S. Rep. Steve Womack,
R-Ark.

From long stretches away from loved ones, navigating harsh weather, maintaining rigs, and complying with complex, ever-changing regulations—truck drivers across the country face countless challenges. After driving for eleven hours, finding a parking spot should be the least of their worries. Yet, it remains a persistent struggle, with 98% of drivers regularly experiencing difficulties securing safe parking.

In fact, the lack of truck parking is the No. 1 concern among drivers, according to recent survey data from the American Transportation Research Institute (ATRI). This issue ranked above driver compensation and even concerns about the overall state of the economy.

The math backs up their concerns: There is just one authorized parking space for every eleven truck drivers on the road today. Faced with parking scarcity, drivers are stuck between a rock and a hard place.

They could continue driving, but federal regulations mandate that truckers stop after eleven hours behind the wheel and rest for ten consecutive hours. Driving beyond these limits is illegal, yet 70% of drivers have been forced to violate hours-of-service rules simply to find safe parking.

To avoid this, many drivers stop short of their driving limit, sometimes up to three hours early, to search for parking. This practice effectively limits their drive time, docking their pay and slowing deliveries of goods across the country. On average, truckers sacrifice 56 minutes of drive time per day, resulting in an annual loss of \$6,813 in earnings or about a 12% pay cut, according to ATA.

Challenges like truck parking scarcity have widespread ripple effects, and without decisive action from Congress, the situation will only worsen.

Yet stopping early doesn't necessarily fix the problem. Even if a driver starts searching for parking well before their eleven-hour limit, they may still struggle to find a safe spot, especially if a highway backup forces other drivers to stop prematurely. When weigh stations and truck stops are filled to capacity and a driver's time limit expires, they are often left with no choice but to park in unauthorized locations such as exit ramps or abandoned lots.

Drivers will tell you that the rest they get in these spots is poor. Parking on exit ramps or in random lots is not safe for our nation's truckers, and drivers worry, for good reason, about the risk of another vehicle hitting their rig or even being attacked and robbed. As a result, they wake up more exhausted than before.

This also poses a danger to other motorists, who don't expect to encounter a parked semi-truck when exiting the highway. According to the U.S. Department of Transportation, there are 55 fatal accidents involving trucks near off-ramps every year.

This crisis isn't just a burden on truckers; it's a significant economic issue, given our heavy reliance on truck freight to stock our shelves and supply our warehouses. In 2022, trucks transported approximately 72.6% of the nation's freight by weight. Over the next decade, this volume is projected to increase by more than 21%. Challenges like truck parking scarcity have widespread ripple effects, and without decisive action from Congress, the situation will only worsen.

The impact of the parking shortage is particularly severe in my district and across the state of Arkansas, where trucking accounts for one in every eleven jobs. Additionally, 86.8% of communities in the state rely exclusively on trucks to move their goods. To support our truckers, protect motorists, and ensure the smooth transport of goods that keep our communities running, this issue must be addressed.

As chairman of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing, and Urban Development (THUD), I am committed to solving this

challenge. In last year's FY2025 THUD appropriations bill, I included \$200 million to expand truck parking availability. Unfortunately, this funding was not appropriated because Congress passed a temporary funding extension rather than approving a full-year budget.

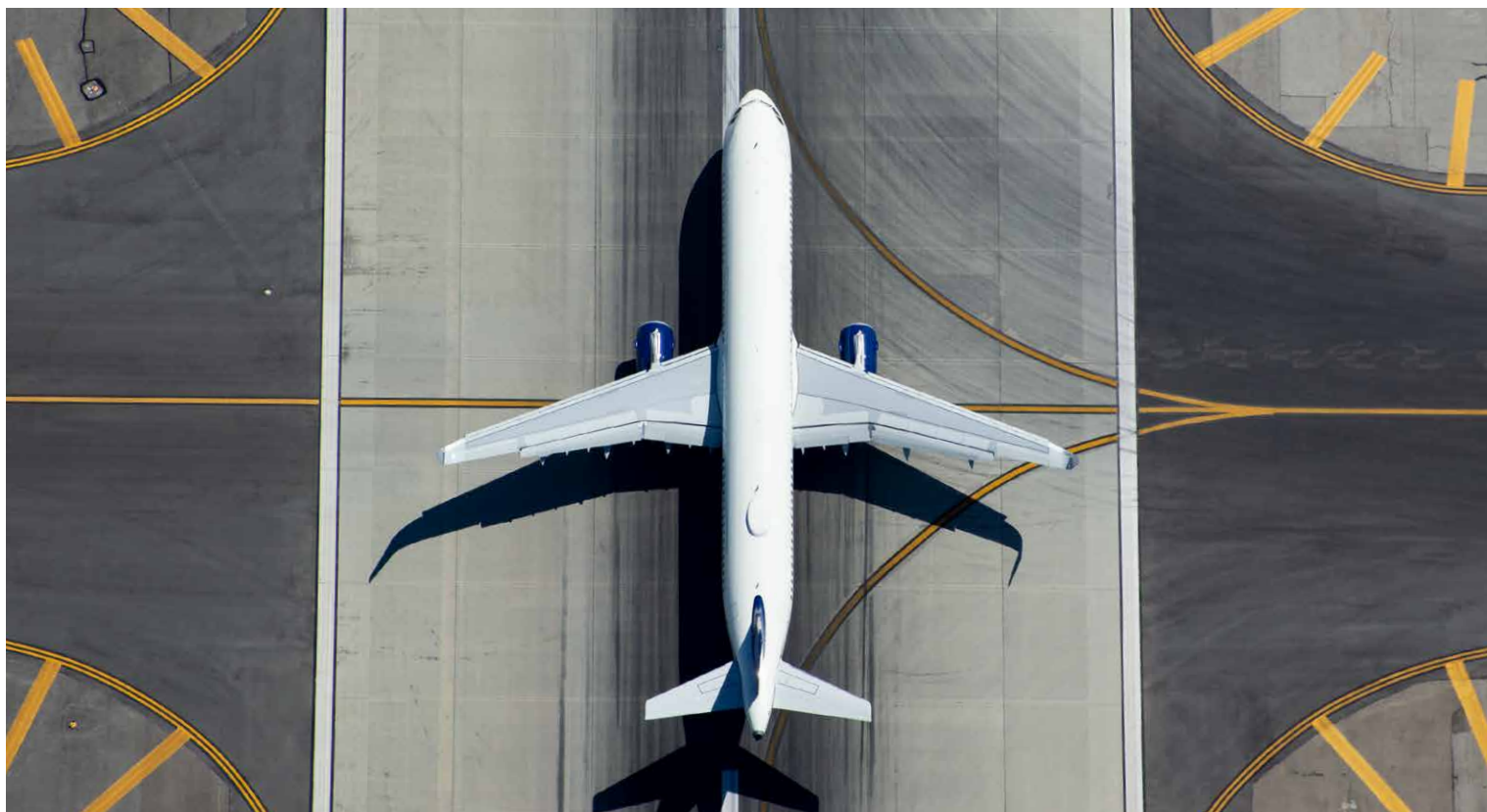
We now have until Sept. 30 to pass FY2026 appropriations bills to fund the government, and I am doing everything in my power to produce a full-year bill that includes resources to address the nation's truck parking crisis.

Truck drivers and the broader trucking industry play a vital role in strengthening our economy by delivering goods and contributing millions in federal and state roadway taxes. At the very least, we must take meaningful steps to ensure they have a safe place to park as they drive across the nation.

Rep. Steve Womack has represented the 3rd District of Arkansas since 2011. He serves as chairman of the House Appropriations Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies (THUD) Subcommittee.



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Upgrade and modernize American airspace with urgency



By Nicholas Calio

President Donald Trump and Transportation Secretary Sean Duffy are right: America deserves a brand-new, state-of-the-art air traffic control (ATC) system.

"We're all going to do a great computerized system for our control towers, brand-new, not pieced together, obsolete," President Trump said when discussing his plans for a new air traffic control system.

We're grateful to House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Chairman Sam Graves, R-Mo., for including \$12.5 billion in funding to

modernize air traffic control in the House reconciliation bill. This funding is a critical down payment on the upgrades President Trump and Secretary Duffy have promised, but it shouldn't be where the investments stop.

"We are going to need a lot more money, but this is the one vehicle we have to start the build right now. I hope the Congress does its work. Frankly, I hope the Congress finds more money."

Modernizing air traffic control should not be something that divides lawmakers. With millions of Americans flying every single day, they deserve to have the gold standard. But without modern technology we cannot claim that distinction.

Secretary Duffy said at an event in California last week. The Secretary has called for at least \$20 billion in funding for the air traffic control overhaul.

As the Senate considers reconciliation, Commerce Committee Chairman Ted Cruz, R-Texas, said this week that "failure is not an option," and "we have to get it done." For years, Sen. Cruz has fully understood the importance of having a modern and effective air traffic control system, and we appreciate him championing this effort.

Modernizing air traffic control should not be something that divides

lawmakers. With millions of Americans flying every single day, they deserve to have the gold standard. But without modern technology we cannot claim that distinction.

There's widespread support for modernizing ATC across the aviation industry. The Modern Skies Coalition – a diverse group of more than 50 organizations across industry, labor and manufacturing that are all united in the

goal to modernize the U.S. air traffic control system.

Air travel is more popular than ever. The TSA recently recorded its busiest day in the agency's history, screening nearly 3.1 million people June 22. Every day, U.S. airlines fly 27,000 flights, transporting 2.7 million passengers and 61,000 tons of cargo around the world. Commercial aviation is also critical to our economy, accounting for 5% of the U.S. GDP and supporting more than 10 million jobs.

In recent years, our aviation system has become much like an old car. It

costs more to keep fixing parts than it would to purchase a brand-new vehicle. Currently, roughly 90% of Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) budget for Facilities and Equipment (F&E) goes to sustainment – meaning we're spending the bulk on maintaining old systems than investing in new ones.

Furthermore, a recent U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) report found that 37% of all air traffic control systems are unsustainable, citing outdated functionality and a lack of spare parts.

If you can believe it, we are still using floppy disks and paper strips in facilities across the country. Nobody in my office under the age of thirty even knows what a floppy disk is! This technology belongs in a time capsule, not in our air traffic control towers.

This year alone we've seen numerous ATC outages, staffing shortages and a devastating crash that resulted in the loss of 67 lives. We cannot keep maintaining the status quo. We owe it to the American traveling public to get this done.

U.S. airlines will never compromise on safety. We ask that Congress do the same and work to fund the critical upgrades President Trump and Secretary Duffy have called for.

Nicholas E. Calio is the president and CEO of Airlines for America (A4A).

THE FUTURE OF FLIGHT IS NOT FLOPPY DISKS



The days of floppy disks must end!

Congress should act with urgency to approve emergency funding to modernize our air traffic control system.

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America's backbone runs through her backroads



By U.S. Rep. Hal Rogers, R-Ky.

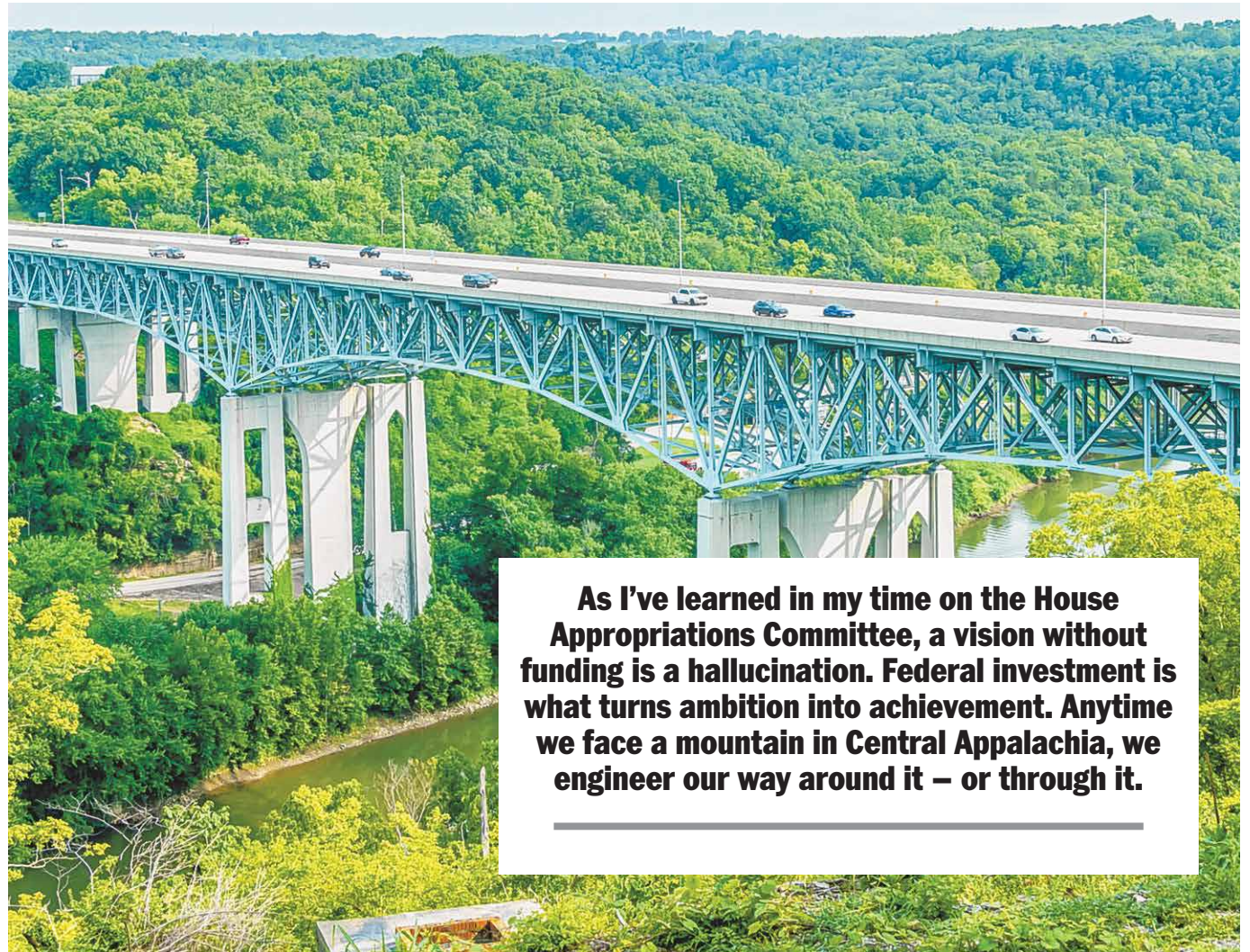
President Dwight D. Eisenhower, the visionary champion of the Interstate Highway Program, shaped the nationwide system that we continue to modify today.

During his State of the Union address in 1955, he said, “a modern, efficient highway system is essential to meet the needs of our growing population, our expanding economy, and our national security.” Those words ring just as true today, especially for rural America.

Traveling through Kentucky’s Appalachian region is one of the most peaceful scenic routes you can take in the country, with hundreds of miles of roadway winding beneath the broad and vibrant canopy of the Daniel Boone National Forest. But these roads are far more than scenic byways. They represent the backbone of our nation, providing lifelines to connect communities, support emergency response, and unlock regional economic development.

For decades, we’ve worked to preserve our beautiful region while opening new gateways for job creation and industrial recruitment. Rural infrastructure of every measure is a multiplier of economic opportunity. That’s why I was excited to return to the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development this Congress. I have worked closely with our state leaders over the years to invest in projects that better connect our rural region to opportunities across the Commonwealth and across the country.

Kentucky now ranks among the top ten leading highway systems in the country for overall performance and cost-effectiveness, proving that our federal and state delegations have prioritized our collaborative efforts. This is no accident. Throughout my career, I have fought for robust investment in rural transportation infrastructure. For example, we are currently on



Kentucky River and Clays Ferry Interstate Bridge overlook.

As I’ve learned in my time on the House Appropriations Committee, a vision without funding is a hallucination. Federal investment is what turns ambition into achievement. Anytime we face a mountain in Central Appalachia, we engineer our way around it – or through it.

the last phase of a 45-mile Mountain Parkway Expansion Project that has culminated with a hefty price tag of nearly \$1 billion, utilizing TIGER and INFRA federal funds, along with sheer perseverance at the federal, state, and local levels. This transformative project is reducing travel time by over 30 minutes to the nearest interstate, enhancing safety and opening faster access to major markets and distribution centers. Projects like this don’t just benefit one region; they strengthen national supply chains, connect labor to opportunity, and prepare our economy for future growth.

As I’ve learned in my time on the House Appropriations Committee, a vision without funding is a hallucination. Federal investment is what turns ambition into achievement. Anytime we face a mountain in Central Appalachia, we engineer our way around it — or through it.

It’s this very spirit that paves the way for economic development and utilizes transportation infrastructure as a vital key to our national security and emergency response in rural areas. For

instance, in response to deadly floods along the Cumberland River in southern Kentucky, the Army Corps of Engineers successfully diverted the Cumberland River through four mountain tunnels. This herculean effort created effective, life-saving flood control and protects local roadways and bridges from repetitive flood damage. I also championed the Cumberland Gap Tunnel project to replace a road that averaged five fatal crashes per year and now serves as a tourism gateway from East Tennessee to the Cumberland Gap National Historical Park. The investment has resulted in countless lives saved, new economic development in both states, and a boost to the local tourism economy.

It is not only our mountain roads that we rely on. In recent years, our often-overlooked airports in Central Appalachia have served as transportation hubs for emergency rescues and vital supply drops after catastrophic floods wiped out rural roads and bridges. Our airports connected those in need when roads could not. Meanwhile, at the national level, we must invest in safer operations and a stronger

air traffic control workforce at our major airports. Through programs such as the FAA’s Airport Improvement Program (AIP), we can strengthen both our national aviation systems and rural airstrips. The AIP is essential for our small airports and emergency response operations, helping ensure Americans can trust the safety and reliability of our aviation systems every time they fly.

While our cities often boast multi-lane expressways or light rail, rural America depends on roads, bridges, and airports just as urgently, if not more. As we chart the path for future federal investment, we must ensure the needs of small American communities are not forgotten. As I have seen firsthand in my district, transportation serves as a unique, multi-faceted lifeline for rural America that can make our entire nation safer, stronger, and more successful from within.

Rep. Hal Rogers is the Dean of the House of Representatives, having represented Kentucky’s 5th Congressional District since 1981. He serves on the House Appropriations Committee.



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Congress must pass an updated Coast Guard authorization to support our Coasties



By U.S. Rep. Mike Ezell, R-Miss.

Every day, the brave men and women of the United States Coast Guard serve our nation with honor — securing our borders, protecting maritime commerce, and defending our shores from threats both foreign and domestic. Their mission is vital to our national security, yet for too long, they’ve operated without the full support and resources they deserve.

As chairman of the Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation

Subcommittee, I’m ready to step up to the plate and work across the aisle with my colleagues. Together, we can draft a strong, forward-looking bill that modernizes our Coast Guard, strengthens our national defense, and honors those who wear the uniform.

It’s crucial that Congress comes together in a bipartisan spirit to draft, pass, and implement an updated Coast Guard Authorization Act that provides the Coast Guard with

trafficking, as well as strengthen our presence in the Arctic against global competitors like China and Russia. While this bill provides an important investment that lays the foundation for the resources our service members need to succeed, it’s only a down payment.

For decades, the Coast Guard has been underfunded. Coasties have proudly self-adopted the motto of “do more with less,” but they

our Coasties have every tool necessary to complete their mission. From cutting-edge cutters to life-saving aircraft, our Coast Guard should have the technology needed to combat drug smuggling, human trafficking, illegal immigration, and growing strategic threats — especially from China’s increasing influence in the Pacific.

This is about more than just policy — it’s a commitment to the men and women who stand watch over our ports, borders, and coasts. And it requires a bipartisan effort to get it done.

I’m ready to play ball, work in good faith with my colleagues on both sides and get this legislation across the finish line — because when America’s seas get rough, our Coast Guard never wavers. It’s time Congress shows the same resolve.

From cutting-edge cutters to life-saving aircraft, our Coast Guard should have the technology needed to combat drug smuggling, human trafficking, illegal immigration, and growing strategic threats — especially from China’s increasing influence in the Pacific.

the modern tools, assets, and support needed to meet an expanding mission in an increasingly complex world.

In the recently passed H.R. 1, the One Big Beautiful Bill, over \$21 billion in funding was included for the Coast Guard. I proudly support this historic funding, particularly because it will bolster the Coast Guard’s missions to secure our maritime borders against illegal migration and drug

shouldn’t have to. Passing a Coast Guard Authorization Act this Congress will build on the progress we made in H.R. 1 and ensure continued support for this critical armed service. The need for more congressional action is clear: we need more investments in critical shoreside infrastructure for maintaining our assets, and our people.

As chairman, my goal is to ensure

Rep. Mike Ezell represents Mississippi’s Fourth Congressional District, which includes the Mississippi Gulf Coast and parts of the Pine Belt. He serves as Chairman of the Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation Subcommittee on the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, where he works to strengthen national security, support maritime industries, and enhance coastal resilience.

New user fees pave the only road to healthy highways



By Nile Elam

While Congress examines the prospects for budget reconciliation, one fact is undeniable: the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act expires Sept. 30, 2026. With that money running out in less than 18 months, how will the critical work to maintain the nation's surface transportation network continue?

Later this year, Congress will be called to draft a new highway bill. If successful, it will keep interstate commerce running smoothly, while keeping some 350,000 men and women gainfully employed in the roadbuilding industry.

Before Congress now is H.R. 1, the "Big, Beautiful Bill," addressing various tax and revenue opportunities on the heels of President Donald Trump's successful campaign to codify and extend major tax wins the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act achieved in his first term. As such, it lays the groundwork for the next highway reauthorization.

During the current process, the House successfully included in H.R. 1 new user fees that are paramount to that future highway bill – fees that directly support the Highway Trust Fund (HTF). Now, we're asking the Senate to follow suit and do what is right for federal infrastructure investment.

New user fees are critical to highway infrastructure

The HTF is 70 years old and stands as the lone financier of all major surface transportation work in the United States. Put simply, the HTF facilitates the construction and maintenance of America's roads, bridges, and transit systems.

Historically funded through federal gasoline and diesel taxes – currently 18.4 cents per gallon and 24.4 cents

per gallon, respectively – the HTF has faced increasing financial shortfalls for decades. The HTF funding mechanism isn't keeping up with reality.

You see it every day on our nation's roads: new drivetrains, more efficient vehicles, plug-ins, hybrids. These modern marvels consume less gas, or none at all. Yet they use the same roads and bridges that conventional vehicles pay to use every day via the fuel tax.

One thing is abundantly clear: HTF revenues that seemed sufficient via fuel tax receipts 30 or 40 years ago pale in contrast to today's need. Yet as traffic increases – and gets heavier thanks to electric vehicle (EV) batteries – the growing need for roadway maintenance and expansion projects comes into sharp focus.

The reality of the HTF is that its

next decade.

A key fact here is that EVs are much heavier than standard drivetrains. Take the nation's most popular vehicle for the past four decades: Ford's F-150. The electric drivetrain carries an 1,800-pound battery, making it 35% heavier than its gas-powered twin. This extra weight is an unsustainable strain on our roads and bridges. Yet the driver of that electric F-150 pays \$0 into the HTF to maintain the roads and bridges it traverses.

EV and hybrid markets continue to gain a foothold among consumers. Bloomberg and the International Energy Agency suggest that EVs could make up a quarter of new vehicle sales in the next 10 years. This portends the ongoing decline of gasoline revenues and further damage to the HTF. Congress must address this user-fee inequity now.

untested trick. They've been explored for years with promising results at local, state, and federal levels.

A national gross vehicle weight (GVW) registration fee also does what it says: enabling the collection of fees based on the weight of the vehicle, thereby eliminating drivetrain variables. GVW fees could easily be incorporated into existing vehicle registration renewal systems. Many states already impose GVW fees, making a national program enacted at the state level viable. Those funds could then be remitted to the states via current HTF formula funding.

Congress must ensure all users invest in our highways

As of this writing, we don't know if the EV and hybrid fees will make it into the Senate's version of the budget reconciliation process. Nevertheless, NAPA and its 1,100+ member companies will continue advocating for this critical policy objective with our elected officials.

NAPA was honored to have our very own Ty Johnson of the Fred Smith Company in Raleigh, NC, represent the asphalt pavement industry during a timely hearing on the HTF in April. Mr. Johnson's testimony before the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee echoed many of the points shared here.

We were also pleased to see Chairman Sam Graves (R-Mo.) and the T&I Committee pass their title within the Big, Beautiful Bill – including an annual \$250 EV fee and \$100 hybrid fee. These funds are projected to contribute almost \$50 billion to the HTF over the lifespan of the bill. While this measure alone won't solve all the HTF financial ills, it is a major step, representing the first user-fee injection into the HTF since the release of the original Jurassic Park.

The Big, Beautiful Bill is emerging as arguably the biggest policy item of President Trump's second term. This package can't move forward without securing new user fees into the HTF, and we must address the financial crisis that looms over the next highway reauthorization package.

Across America's highways, vehicles are going farther and hauling more efficiently than we could have imagined in the nineties. It's time to ditch our vintage views on user fees and secure funding for safe roads that drive America's economic prosperity.

Nile Elam is vice president of government affairs for the National Asphalt Pavement Association.



(Left) Ty Johnson, president of Construction Partners Inc.'s Fred Smith Co. in North Carolina, speaks with Rep. David Rouzer (R-NC) during a visit to a job site along Interstate 95 near Fayetteville in December 2024.

revenue sources, the gas and diesel fuel taxes, have not changed since 1993 – when a dozen eggs cost less than a buck and the average American home sold for less than \$150,000. A trip to the supermarket or a tour of local real estate reveals those days are long gone. Still, the HTF remains stuck in the past.

Compounding the problem, modern vehicles are significantly more fuel-efficient. While this is a positive development for the environment and consumers, it has devastating effects on the HTF.

According to the Congressional Budget Office, the HTF has required regular infusions from the general fund to remain solvent – more than \$140 billion since 2008. At current highway authorization outlays, and absent any user-fee corrections, the HTF faces a deficit greater than \$200 billion over the

New solutions for highway investment

Securing equitable user-fee contributions from road users is priority No. 1. If it sounds too good to be true, too unfathomable to execute at a national level, it isn't. According to the National Conference of State Legislatures, four-fifths of the states have already implemented EV registration fees to make up for lost fuel tax revenues.

Other worthwhile HTF revenue proposals include VMTs and GVW.

The vehicles miles traveled (VMTs) proposal does exactly what it says: assess a fee on the number of miles a vehicle travels, directly correlating to its use of our roadways. VMTs have been piloted in states from Oregon to Virginia. The technologies already exist to capture VMT data without raising privacy concerns. VMTs are not a new,



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As the industry's national voice, NAPA works with Congress, the Administration, Departments of Transportation, and numerous other stakeholders and partners to engineer smooth, safe, long-lasting roads. Passing a surface transportation package before September 2026 will ensure the quality and longevity of our roads, support communities across the nation, and strengthen our national economic competitiveness — paving the way for American success.

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We must invest in air traffic control for a safer tomorrow



By U.S. Rep. Stephanie Bice,
R-Okla.

In today's hyperconnected, fast-moving world, a modern, reliable transportation system is not a luxury; it is a necessity. Over the last few years, we've seen train derailments, crumbling bridges, and increased strain on America's aviation systems. Every dollar spent on our transportation systems today helps avoid costlier problems down the road. However, we must focus on maximizing taxpayer dollars by modernizing our aging infrastructure, streamlining processes, and supercharging hiring methods.

Oklahoma has a rich history in aerospace. It started just 26 years after the state was established, when Wiley Post, a young man trained in Oklahoma, became the first person to complete a solo flight around the world. Since then, the state's infrastructure has grown, and Oklahoma has established itself as a leader in aerospace innovation. The Oklahoma City Metro area now has over 290 aerospace firms, in addition to military installations like Tinker Air Force Base, the largest single-site employer in Oklahoma. Tinker is the home to the E-3 Sentry AWACS and provides maintenance for the B-52, KC-135, B-1, and B-2 aircraft. We are also the proud home of the Mike Monroney Aeronautical Center (MMAC) which provides products and services to all five of the FAA's lines of business - airport, air traffic organization, aviation safety, commercial space transportation and security and hazardous materials safety. Specifically, MMAC is the principal facility for air traffic controllers (ATCs), training over twenty thousand students across career specialties annually. Services at the center provide technical and managerial training and development for our workforce and the aviation community.



The importance of the work these air traffic controllers provide cannot be overstated. They serve in high stress situations and have a zero-failure mission. Recent reports have shown long-time issues with outdated technology, poor infrastructure, and strenuous hours, often logging six-day work weeks and ten-hour shifts. These issues cause critical risks to quality of work and safety of the American people.

said they are working to reduce wait times by concurrently processing medical and security evaluations, ultimately once again saving time and money. This streamlined approach, which has reduced hiring timelines by months has not always been the case and reflects a commitment to strengthening the workforce at the MMAC and ensuring the safety and efficiency of U.S. airspace.

The importance of this training facility has been brought into sharp focus by recent events, including the tragedy at Reagan National Airport (DCA) and temporary outages at Newark Liberty International Airport (EWR). As vice chair of the Transportation, Housing, and Urban Development

Subcommittee, I am dedicated to working with Secretary Duffy and President Donald Trump to ensure that the MMAC is fully equipped to train the next generation of ATCs. That means offering competitive salaries to attract new talent, updating outdated infrastructure, and providing bonuses to retain irreplaceable talent with 20 or more years' experience. By providing the necessary resources, we can uphold the highest standards of safety in our skies and continue Oklahoma's proud tradition of excellence in aerospace.

From Wiley Post's historic flight to the cutting-edge operations at Tinker AFB and the MMAC, Oklahoma remains a driving force in aviation and aerospace innovation. The state's contributions not only bolster the national economy but also play a pivotal role in safeguarding the future of air travel and national defense.

Rep. Stephanie Bice has represented Oklahoma's 5th District since 2020. She serves as vice chair of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing, and Urban Development, and chair of the House Administration Subcommittee on Modernization and Innovation.

Great Lakes, greater potential: The case for Great Lakes ports



By U.S. Rep. Dave Joyce, R-Ohio

When most Americans think about ports, they picture massive container ships docking in Los Angeles or Savannah. However, some of our nation's most vital maritime assets lie not along the coasts but inland — in the Great Lakes region. These ports may not always make headlines, but they are central to our national security, economic efficiency, and domestic supply chain resilience. As the federal government considers infrastructure priorities, investing in the Great Lakes port system must be a top-tier objective.

The Great Lakes region is home to more than 100 ports, stretching from Duluth to Buffalo and handling over 230 million tons of cargo annually. These aren't just regional workhorses — they are strategic national assets. The Lakes provide direct maritime access to America's industrial heartland, connecting cities such as Cleveland, Detroit, Chicago, and Milwaukee to the rest of the country via a vast, multimodal network of ships, railroads, and highways. Modernizing these ports will increase the flow of goods throughout the Midwest and beyond — more efficiently, more affordably, and more securely. Unfortunately, when it comes to federal support, they've been consistently overlooked.

For example, Port Infrastructure Development Program (PIDP) grants are funds that are intended to improve the safety, efficiency, and reliability of goods movement at American ports. While the program is competitive and open to all regions, its awards have been heavily skewed in favor of specific areas. Since Fiscal Year (FY) 2019, 38% of PIDP funding has been allocated to West Coast ports and 34% to East Coast ports. In stark contrast, just 2% of those



Docked at the Port of Cleveland under a backdrop of high-rises and urban life, a lake freighter waits to unload — an enduring symbol of Lake Erie's economic role.

funds were awarded to Great Lakes ports in the most recent funding cycle.

This disparity isn't due to a lack of quality applications. Former Department of Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg acknowledged to me in a FY 2025 budget hearing before the House Appropriations Transportation, Housing, and Urban Development (THUD) Subcommittee that several strong proposals were submitted — yet only two projects received funding. These ports serve more than 110 million people across multiple states and provinces, support vital manufacturing supply chains, and play a central role in our national economy. But they are being shortchanged.

As a member of the House Appropriations THUD Subcommittee, I was

grateful for the opportunity to bring this issue directly to the attention of Transportation Secretary Sean Duffy in a budget hearing earlier this year and appreciate the Trump Administration's increased support for the program in its FY 2026 budget request. I look forward to working with President Donald Trump and his team to ensure sufficient funds are allocated to ports in Lake Erie and across the Great Lakes.

From a national security perspective, the importance of these ports cannot be overstated. The Great Lakes support the movement of critical materials, such as iron ore, cement, and aggregates that are essential to military infrastructure and domestic manufacturing. Inland waterways are

less susceptible to global shipping disruptions and more easily monitored and protected from cyber or physical threats. Investing in this system builds redundancy into our national logistics network, ensuring that the movement of key commodities can continue even when other routes are compromised.

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Cost efficiency is another significant benefit. Investments in port modernization — such as dredging, dock improvements, and intermodal connections — yield long-term savings not only for local economies but also for national logistics systems.

Lastly, investing in Great Lakes ports enhances the timeliness and reliability of freight movement. In an economy where just-in-time delivery is the standard, delays can cascade through supply chains. Port bottlenecks and outdated infrastructure lead to congestion and uncertainty. With strategic upgrades, these ports can better absorb seasonal peaks, accommodate larger vessels, and process cargo more quickly — moving goods faster to factories, stores, and consumers.

Supporting the Great Lakes port system isn't about local favoritism — it's about recognizing that inland infrastructure is just as critical as our coastal gateways. This is a wise, targeted investment in America's long-term economic and security posture. I will continue to work in Congress and with the Trump administration to seize the opportunity to invest in our Great Lakes ports — not just to support the region, but to strengthen the entire nation.

Rep. Dave Joyce was elected to represent the 14th Congressional District of Ohio in November 2012 and is currently in his seventh term. He serves on the House Committee on Appropriations, serving as Chairman of the Financial Services and General Government Subcommittee, which scrutinizes federal spending and determines how your tax dollars are spent. He also serves on the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense, as well as the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing, and Urban Development.

China's iron grip on American supply chains



By U.S. Rep. Dusty Johnson,
R-S.D.

The United States relies on global trade and strong supply chains to meet domestic demand and boost American production, but one nation – China – has manipulated America's economy to its advantage, undermining American businesses, consumers, and national security. China exploits loopholes in our trade laws and has attempted to gain a chokehold on American ports and foreign ones – like the Panama Canal. Their actions are not an accident, but a deliberate attempt to grow their influence and dominance. The Chinese Communist Party is not our friend.

China is notorious for its unfair trade practices. Its companies abuse U.S. trade laws, like the de minimis exemption, to ship goods to America at low prices and avoid paying duties and taxes. Chinese companies like Shein and Temu have flooded U.S. Customs and Border Protection with these packages. In fact, more than one billion de minimis shipments enter the U.S. in a one-year period. These practices harm other American and global retailers who play by the rules.

While President Donald Trump has taken action to close the de minimis loophole, abuse of U.S. and global shipping laws doesn't stop there. After the COVID-19 pandemic, the Los Angeles and Long Beach ports experienced severe disruptions because foreign-flagged ocean carriers prioritized Chinese electronics over American food exports. These unfair shipping practices caused American agricultural exporters to lose 21 percent of confirmed foreign sales, which translates to billions of dollars. Hailing from South Dakota, which has a strong agriculture export economy, I set out to address the problem by giving the Federal Maritime Commission the authority and tools it needed to crack down on China and level the playing



The Ocean Shipping Reform Act opened my eyes to the serious threat China poses to our supply chain. Since then, I've made protecting U.S. ports, shippers, and manufacturers from the Chinese Communist Party's (CCP) influence a top priority.

field for American producers. Once my bill, the Ocean Shipping Reform Act, was signed into law, shipping container prices dropped dramatically, port congestion eased, and American products regained their competitive access to global markets.

The Ocean Shipping Reform Act opened my eyes to the serious threat China poses to our supply chain. Since then, I've made protecting U.S. ports, shippers, and manufacturers from the Chinese Communist Party's (CCP) influence a top priority. I secured a provision in the National Defense Authorization Act to prohibit the use of the CCP state-controlled shipping logistics platform, LOGINK, at U.S. ports. If LOGINK gained access to U.S. carriers and ports, the CCP would be at an extreme competitive advantage through their access to sensitive and proprietary business information, giving them the opportunity to underbid foreign competitors and further increase dependency on Chinese markets.

One of the most worrying facets of China's infiltration is its technology. Picture this: a CCP official accessing highly detailed, millimeter-level accuracy of U.S. infrastructure. Light

detection and ranging (LiDAR) technology is a remote sensing technology that captures detailed three-dimensional maps of environments with incredible accuracy. This technology is widely used in agriculture, autonomous cars, and critical transportation. China has become a frontrunner on developing LiDAR technology, which is used in industries across the U.S. By law, if the CCP requests a company to hand over its collected data on U.S. infrastructure, the company is required to comply. Allowing our greatest adversary to have precise details on our roads, railways, airports, and ocean shipping ports is a significant national security threat.

I'm leading the Securing Infrastructure from Adversaries Act to prohibit

Chinese LiDAR technology from being used by the Department of Transportation to protect our infrastructure and supply chains from the CCP threat. I've also sounded the alarm on the use of this technology in Chinese drones that are used in American agriculture. These drones can collect and interpret crop data that is impossible for the human eye to see. The CCP's access to this data and software gives them an unprecedented ability to control our agriculture supply chain. This is a risk we cannot afford to take.

Regardless of the industry, China's goal is the same: exploit America's supply chains for its own economic gain. China's actions deliberately undermine America's industries, safety, and sovereignty. Congress and President Trump must work together to enforce tough-on-China policies and ramp up domestic production to increase resiliency in our supply chains and keep Americans safe and secure.

Rep. Dusty Johnson has represented South Dakota's at-large congressional district since 2019. He serves on the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and the Select Committee on China.



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Building a 21st century rail system that drives America forward



By U.S. Rep. Darin LaHood, R-Ill.

Resilient and reliable transportation infrastructure is a foundation of our country. Freight rail systems, highways, bridges and waterways all are critical tools for economic growth for our communities. From agricultural products to energy, transportation routes keep our supply chain efficient and products moving.

From agricultural products to energy, transportation routes keep our supply chain efficient and products moving.

In Congress, one of my top priorities is to help ensure Illinois continues to lead as the transportation hub of the Midwest. I have introduced multiple pieces of legislation to support America's trucking and rail industries, been a leading voice for increased access to public transportation and advocated for and secured federal investments for water infrastructure.

The current North American railcar fleet is comprised of over 1.6 million railcars with an additional 321,000 in storage. According to the most recent data from 2023, the railway supply industry contributed \$75 billion to the United States' GDP and directly supported 240,000 jobs. In my home state of Illinois, the freight rail industry employs over 18,000 people, drives manufacturing, supports our farmers, and ensures global competitiveness.

Unfortunately, many of our railcars are outdated. These older railcars are less efficient, prone to mechanical issues, and risk the chance of failing safety standards. To support these overdue upgrades, Congress can encourage private investment and market certainty for the

rail sector. Earlier this year, I was proud to introduce the FREIGHT RAILCAR Act of 2025 alongside my colleague from Illinois, Rep. Brad Schneider, to improve the efficiency of railcars and address supply chain constraints.

This pro-growth, pro-safety, bipartisan bill provides a non-refundable 10% tax

trailers. This outdated tax hinders trucking companies from hiring more drivers and upgrading their fleets to cleaner, safer, more efficient models.

Part of a secure supply chain is strong water infrastructure. The 2024 Water Resources Development Act included several of my provisions to strengthen Illinois' wa-

(FTA) Buses and Bus Facilities Competitive Grant Program, which assists transit agencies in modernizing and maintaining their bus fleets and facilities.

As Congress debates the next surface transportation reauthorization bill, I look forward to continuing to work with my colleagues to slash bureaucratic red tape to



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A railway yard in Illinois, playing a vital role in the modern supply chain and logistics network.

credit for the replacement or modernization of existing railcars over a three-year period. This will lead to renewed investment in higher capacity, encourage fuel efficiency, drive innovation, and support freight railcar manufacturing in the United States.

The commercial trucking industry is a vital economic driver that impacts critical industries across the country. Unfortunately, the United States is experiencing an unprecedented shortage of truck drivers, and bureaucratic red tape is making it worse. My legislation, the LICENSE Act, will streamline the process for future commercial drivers to get a license while maintaining high safety standards. Along with several bipartisan colleagues, I also introduced legislation to abolish the 12% federal excise tax on semitrucks and

terways, boost economic opportunity, and mitigate flood damage. Through the Community Project Funding process, which allows members of Congress to designate funding for critical initiatives through the appropriations process, I helped secure \$75 million to upgrade the Mississippi and Illinois Rivers' navigation infrastructure.

Bus and public transportation also play an important role in our communities. Each year, buses transport millions of riders to work, doctor visits, school, recreation activities, and many more important parts of our daily lives. Since 2018, I have proudly served as the co-chair of the bipartisan Congressional Bus Caucus alongside Rep. Rick Larson, D-Wash. Through our work, the Caucus has helped grow the Federal Transit Administration's

simplify the application process, continue funding core infrastructure projects, and take bold actions to improve the United States' domestic manufacturing sector.

Building and maintaining infrastructure requires policies and investments that support the hardworking Americans who keep our infrastructure, supply chains, and economy moving. Congress must work together in a bipartisan manner to ensure that the United States' transportation infrastructure is safe, reliable, modern, and efficient.

Rep. Darin LaHood has represented Illinois since 2015. He serves on the House Ways and Means Committee, where he chairs the subcommittee on Work and Welfare.

Hear Us Out.

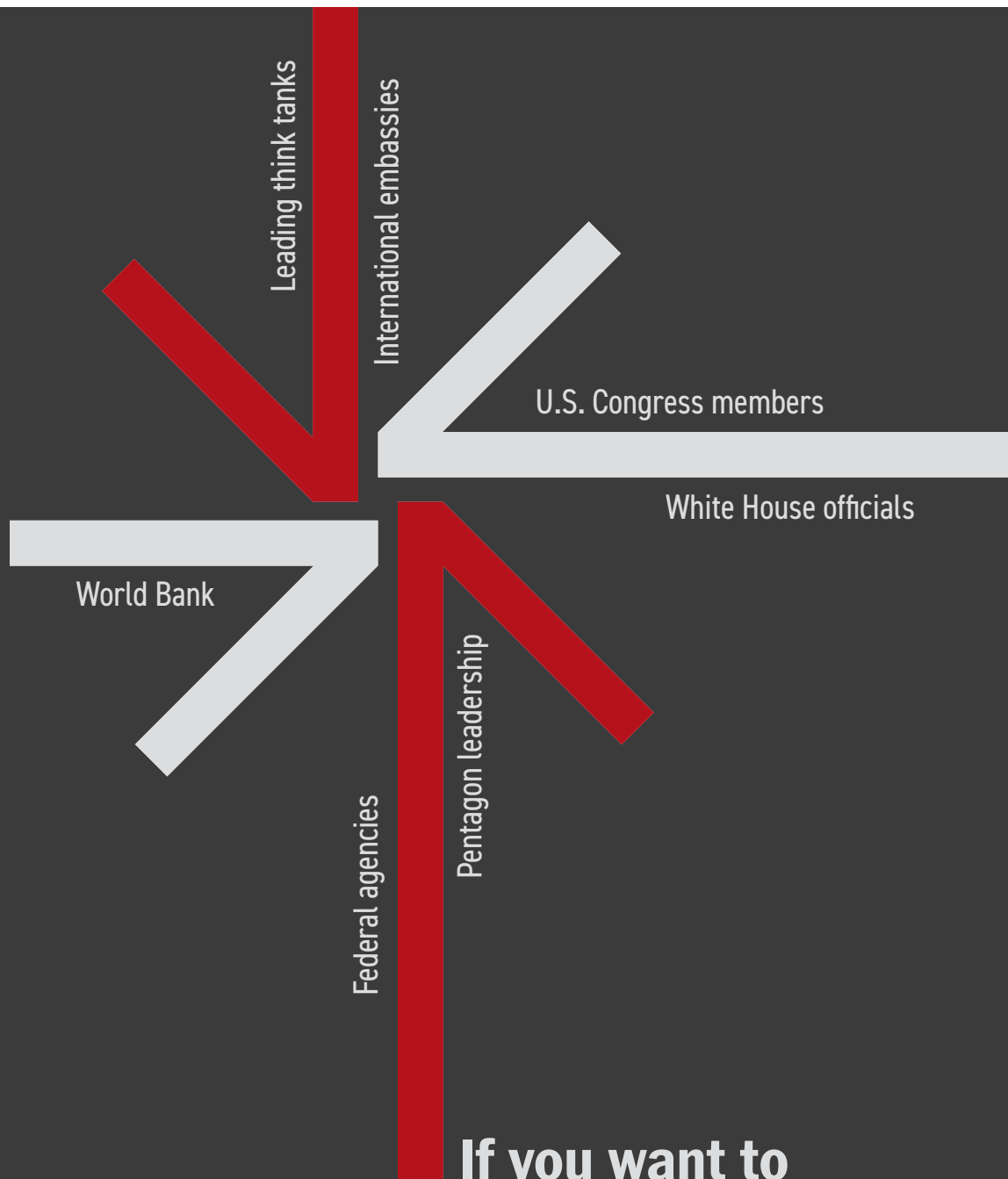


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