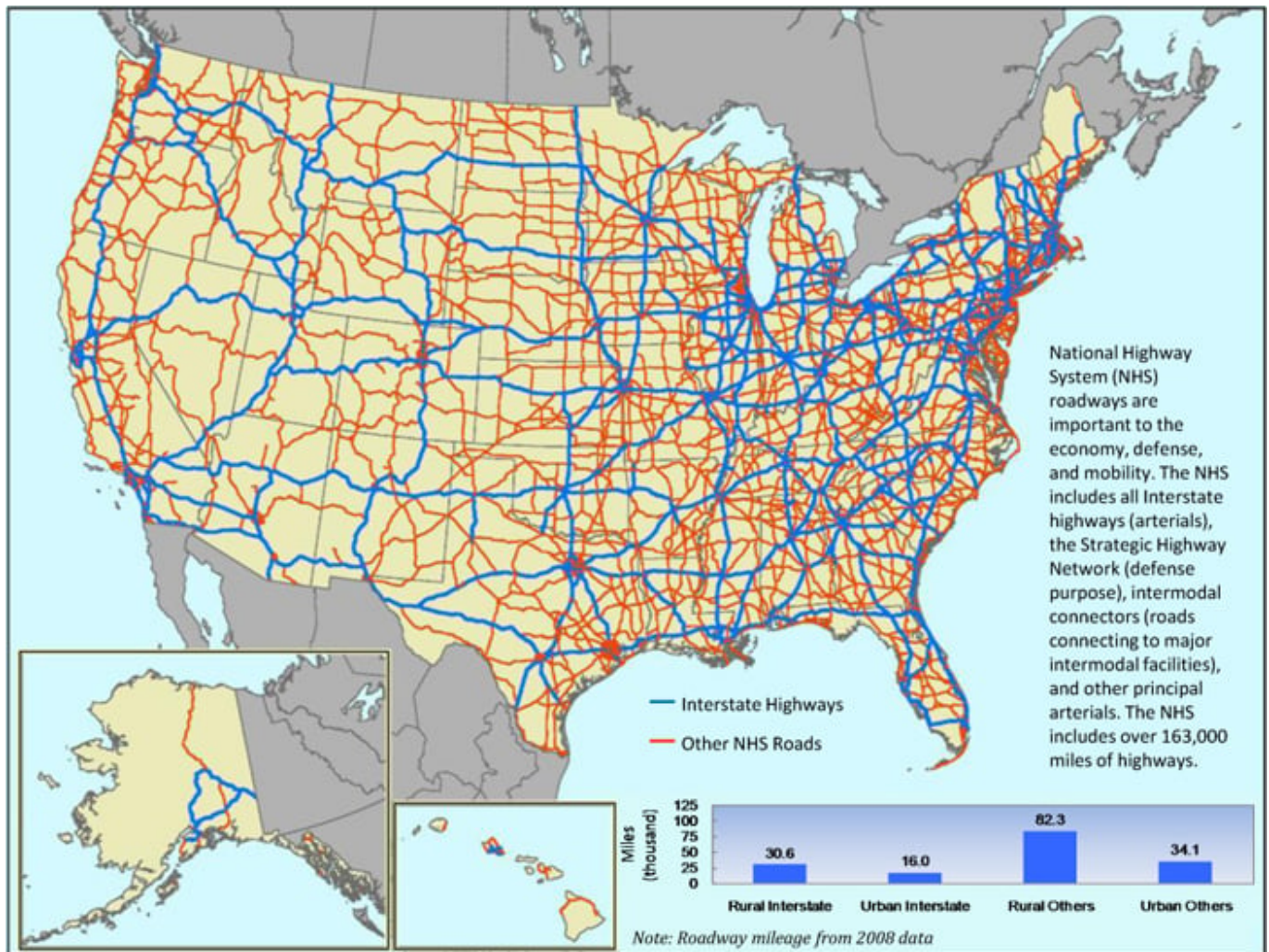


Could it be a Happy New Year?



by **Bill Corden**

Now that the “holidays” are past tense (has anyone else noticed that absolutely NONE of the TV commercials even bother to say “Christmas” anymore?) But I digress.

Now that they are gone, I propose this best of political fantasies. What I would like to see on New Year’s Day is a bipartisan group of our most powerful elected representatives on the TV, with a huge, detailed map of “The United States America” as the backdrop.

On that map I’d like to see certain social substructures highlighted and identified for enhancement. Structures such as airports, interstate highways, ports, decaying city centers,

social housing, to name some of the most important ones, and the specific projects proposed for each major trouble spot.

As the fantasy unfolds, I'd like to see the leader of this powerful group propose the formation of a new cabinet department.

Call it the Department of Infrastructure Renewal with a motto of " we get it done"

Each geographic area will be run by Commissioners much the way Baseball and Football is managed (although I hate to cite pro sports as a beacon for society) with the Commissioners presenting the Houses with progress reports on a scheduled basis.

If those Commissioners don't deliver, then they get fired just like in real life and we march on until we find the person who CAN deliver, like a Ueberroth or a Goodell

Where does the money come from?

Well, you can skim some off the top of the \$16 **trillion** the top fortune 500 companies alone generate per annum.

You could ask Amazon with their \$1.2 **billion** in revenue each and every day of the year to pay a social responsibility tax for their part in clogging up the freeways or you could slap on a monthly cellphone tax that nobody would notice but would generate untold millions towards the infrastructure costs.

It was at this point in the dream that I woke up, changes like that only happen with full blown revolutions.

My next fantasy is about getting someone to re-write the Mental Health act. Trying to regulate the ownership of guns is a fight that can't be won but early identification of the psychos who kill people with them might give us a chance.