

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the conference report to accompany H.R. 2577, an act making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes.

Mitch McConnell, John Cornyn, Mike Rounds, Thad Cochran, Roy Blunt, John Barrasso, Marco Rubio, Lamar Alexander, Tom Cotton, Bill Cassidy, John Hoeven, Thom Tillis, Jeff Flake, James M. Inhofe, Tim Scott, Shelley Moore Capito, Steve Daines.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum call be waived with respect to the cloture motion.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMPROMISE GUN LEGISLATION

Mr. REID. Mr. President, the Collins vote, which just took place a few minutes ago, was a vote that was, for lack of a better description, just a show vote. The Collins supporters won. That was their victory, and it is the first time since the historic vote of Senator FEINSTEIN in 1993 dealing with assault weapons that the NRA has been in a situation where they can't declare a victory. They lost this one.

But I would hope now the Republican leader will bring the Collins compromise to a vote here on the floor—a real vote. Today's vote was kind of like heads I win, tails you lose, because for the supporters of the Collins amendment, that was it with them because it guaranteed that even if Collins supporters won the vote, it wouldn't advance. But we did. We won the vote. Collins won that vote.

It is really too bad that the Republican leader worked so hard to defeat the bipartisan compromise put forward by the brave senior Senator from Maine. But despite the efforts of the majority, now the Republican leadership has a responsibility to bring the Collins bill to this floor for a real vote, not a fake vote—a vote that provides

the bill a real chance to advance. I sure hope we have that opportunity. It is the right thing for the country. The country agrees that something has to be done.

Even though it wasn't a big victory, it was a victory. I hope the NRA will step back and do what they have said they would do 15 years ago, and that is work to close loopholes, especially the gun show loophole. It is disappointing that they have taken a new tack and are against anything for more gun safety.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

VOTING IN THE SENATE AND HOUSE

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, it looks like this week is coming to an end in terms of legislative efforts—or the lack thereof—in the House and in the Senate. I want everyone to know what this week was. It seemed like the week of disruption. We had a filibuster in the U.S. Senate, and we had a sit-in—an unprecedented sit-in—in the House of Representatives. What was that all about? It wasn't only over the substance—it goes to the struggle to find the best way for gun control, which really we want to be violence control. And what did we filibuster about? Yes, we wanted to take up the no-fly, no-buy issue, which says that if you are on a terrorist list, you shouldn't be able to buy a gun, and to extend background checks to Internet sales and gun shows, but it was also about the right to vote. The filibuster was to get a vote. We didn't say how people would vote. We knew that would be a subject of debate, further amendment, further amendment, and then a vote. Votes are called yes or no. But the filibuster was about getting the opportunity to offer the amendments, to even be able to vote at all.

Let's go over to the House of Representatives. What did they sit in about? This was not just a spontaneous spout or pout. One of the most distinguished Americans, the Congressman from Georgia, JOHN LEWIS, led a sit-in. He led a sit-in, once again, about getting a vote. This is a man who marched across the Pettus Bridge from Selma, AL, faced being beaten, faced dogs, and bears the permanent legacy and wounds of that civil rights struggle, but he wanted to march for the right to vote and was willing to bear any burden. Then why did this man at a certain age and stage literally sit down on his hands and knees again? And what was that for? That was for the right to vote. That wasn't taking on some authoritarian Governor; that was simply in the House of Representatives: Give us a vote.

People will say: Well, why did they do that? Those votes lost in the Senate. But there were actually two compromises here—a Collins amendment and, at the last minute, a Johnson amendment.

I want people to know what is going on here. There is the substantive debate on how we can curb violence in our country and violence perpetrated where we are just awash in guns in our country. That is the subject of debate and discussion. I welcome all ideas. I recognize and support the Second Amendment of the Constitution. As I said earlier in the discussion, I support not only the Second Amendment, I support all of the amendments, and I really take seriously my oath to defend the Constitution and to defend the American people against all enemies, foreign and domestic. We took that oath.

So I am saying here, can we get rid of the obstructionism to get to votes and to get to real votes, not only votes that are some kind of parliamentary procedure linguistic thing going on. We vote on the motion to proceed. We vote to table the motion. Those are really legitimate parliamentary processes, but they are the fog. They are the fog of parliamentary procedure.

The American people have a right—I think the Congress and Members of it should have a right to offer solutions to national problems. I think that should come in the form of legislation and the amendment process following the rules. Follow the rules. Put out the bill. But when it comes time to vote, we should be able to have a vote and we should be able to vote clearly yes or no. That is all we are asking for here.

We are going to go through yet one more week, and I hope that next week we can actually face our responsibilities and try to come up with real solutions to a very real national problem, which is how to curb violence in our country; to come up with a variety of ideas, and from those ideas, offer them through legislation and amendment and have very clear votes.

People would like us, first of all, to act like Senators and Congresspeople. They would also like us to act with civility. We have seen it time and time again here. But they would also like for us to speak in plain English and have rules that we should follow and that they can understand.

So as this week comes to an end—this has been an unprecedented week in our country of a lot of turmoil and tumult. There has been a lot within our mutual institutions. I hope calmer heads prevail when we come back. Let's really get back to the legislative process that has been established by Senate rule and tradition. Let's have civil debate. Let's approach it with intellectual rigor. Let's approach it with the sincerity I feel is known on both sides of the aisle. But, please, let's seek solutions to our national problems and not seek solutions to solve our party problems.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ENZI). The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CONGRATULATING COLUMBUS,
OHIO, ON WINNING THE SMART
CITY CHALLENGE

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I would be remiss if I didn't first say that I am pleased to see in the Presiding Officer's chair a fellow Eagle Scout from Wyoming who is as good to the Scouts as a middle-aged man—close enough—as the Scouts were to him as a young man. So it is an honor to speak on the floor with Senator ENZI being in the Presiding Officer's chair.

This has been a great week for my State, the State of Ohio. Yesterday, I was on this floor joining my colleague from Cincinnati to speak about the Cleveland Cavaliers' historic NBA championship victory. Cleveland had not had a winning sports team—winning meaning a championship team—since I was 12 years old, when Jim Brown ran for the Cleveland Browns. In those days, we expected the Cleveland Indians to win every year. They never did. The Cavaliers didn't even exist in 1964. So this was a particularly exciting week for the Cleveland Cavaliers and for my city of Cleveland.

My wife joined literally a million people on the streets of downtown Cleveland to celebrate yesterday. This is in a county of 1.2 million. So either everybody who lives in the county was there or people from all over Northeast Ohio came to join them.

The second great thing for my State this week is that this afternoon Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx is in the capital, Columbus—one of our other major cities and the largest city in the State—in the Linden neighborhood, on the sort of east-northeast side of town, to announce our city as winner of the Smart City Challenge. Secretary Foxx created this competition to define what it means to be a “smart city” in the 21st century. It was a challenge for our cities to integrate new technologies—from self-driving vehicles to electric vehicles, to smart sensors—into this transportation network.

Just as importantly, Secretary Foxx challenged applicants to think beyond adopting new technology for its own sake. Applicants were encouraged to offer a vision for how that new technology can make a difference for all Americans—from connecting low-income neighborhoods to jobs and opportunity to reducing congestion; to making streets safer for pedestrians, bicyclists, and children to get, certainly, to work, but to get to the doctor or the grocery store; to all things that a modern big-city transportation system could be.

Earlier this year, 78 cities from across the Nation submitted applications. In March, the Department selected from those 78 just 7 finalists to

compete for today's award. The competition was tough. Cities such as Portland, OR, Denver, Kansas City, Pittsburgh, San Francisco, and Austin were all finalists, joining the city of Columbus. Columbus' win was all the more impressive as a result.

Our city would not have won without, first of all, Mayor Andy Ginther's leadership. The mayor didn't do this alone, although he played such a prominent role. The Central Ohio community united to develop innovative solutions to our city's challenges, and that made all the difference in the world.

So \$40 million in grant funding from DOT will be matched by an additional \$10 million from Vulcan, Inc., and \$90 million of matching funds will come from the community of Columbus. This investment will allow the city to deploy some very impressive technology. Columbus will expand the use of electric vehicles. It will be testing a range of sensors, connected vehicles, and smartphone applications.

At Easton, a major commercial hub, a small fleet of driverless vehicles will link the Easton Transit Center with nearby employers. This will expand horizons for bus riders from lower income neighborhoods, such as Linden, who will be able to more easily travel to jobs not near the busline or the transit center.

I am particularly excited that Columbus will focus on the way the transportation systems affect the city's health. In some neighborhoods, the infant mortality rate is four times the national average. My State, shamefully, is 47th in the Nation in infant mortality and 50th in the Nation in Black infant mortality. It is shameful, and it is for a lot of reasons, one of which is that we have a State government that has never really invested in public health in the way they should.

We can't think about problems like this in a vacuum. It isn't just a health care problem. It is a public works problem, and that includes transportation. The “Smart Columbus” plan will measure missed prenatal and pediatric visits so we can align our transportation system with the goal of reducing infant mortality by 40 percent and cutting in half the racial health disparity.

I would add that Mayor Ginther, as council president prior to his job as mayor this year, led the charge city-wide on reducing infant mortality. The Greater Columbus Infant Mortality Task Force's Celebrate One Program has made impressive progress in building a coalition and setting aggressive goals to tackle this issue. These new transit options will build on this work.

This is what becoming a smart city should be about—expanding how we think about infrastructure and public works, harnessing technology to ensure a transportation system that benefits everyone, making it a truly public work.

Today's award wouldn't have happened without a very long list of re-

gional partners. I can't name them all, but the Ohio State University, the Columbus Partnership, Columbus 2020, Battelle, Nationwide, Honda, American Electric Power, and many, many more came together to build the application, and they will be working side by side with the city to roll out this vision.

I want to thank Secretary Foxx and Administrator Flowers, with whom I spent part of an afternoon just a couple of weeks ago in Columbus as she was announcing something else we were doing along the CMAX corridor, along the east-northeast Cleveland Avenue part of Columbus.

Our Nation's transportation system is undergoing radical transformation. A decade from now, my children, who live in Columbus, and my grandchildren, who live in Columbus, will travel in different ways than we do today. The Secretary's vision for this program was bold, and I am so excited for cities—for Columbus, specifically, but I also know that other cities will see what the smart city of Columbus has done with this grant, with this new technology in transportation, and they will work with Columbus, mimic Columbus, and turn it into a success for our whole Nation.

VOTING RIGHTS ACT

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, nothing is more fundamental for a democracy than the right to vote. Last year, we celebrated the 50th anniversary of the Voting Rights Act, one of the most important pieces of legislation we passed in the 20th century. It opened the door to millions—literally millions—of Americans to exercise their constitutional right.

This year will mark the first Presidential election in half a century without the full protections guaranteed by the Voting Rights Act. Three years ago this week, the Supreme Court gutted a key part of the law, taking the teeth out of provisions that protect voters from suppression laws, with its decision in *Shelby County v. Holder*.

Since that misguided decision, States across the country have passed new voting restrictions that would disenfranchise hundreds of thousands of Americans. Unfortunately, Ohio is ground zero in these efforts to restrict voting rights. These laws, passed by an ultraconservative State legislature in Columbus, include cutting early voting and eliminating Golden Week—created by a more moderate Republican legislature of a decade earlier—when voters can register and vote on the same day. In other words, early voting starts a week before registration closes, so during that week a new voter can register and vote in the same trip to the board of elections.

This May, a Federal court did the right thing and struck down that law and reinstated Golden Week and early voting—proving once again that these State legislators went too far. Judge Watson, a George Bush appointee in