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House of Representatives

The House was not in session today. Its next meeting will be held on Tuesday, August 3, 2021, at 10 a.m.

Senate

MONDAY, AUGUST 2, 2021

The Senate met at 12 noon and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal Lord God, our refuge and strength, we praise You that we have nothing to fear. Because we remember how You have sustained our Nation in the past, we trust Your providence to help us reach our desired destination.

Lord, continue to lead our lawmakers as they seek Your wisdom, justice, and grace. May they remember that those who would leave a legacy of faithfulness must stride to be faithful to You.

Inspire our Senators to perform their appointed duties with such reverence that their service will be like the sun shining forth on a cloudless morning.

We pray in Your sovereign Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

The Senator from Michigan.

Mr. PETERS. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PETERS). Without objection, it is so ordered.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

INVESTING IN A NEW VISION FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND SURFACE TRANSPORTATION IN AMERICA ACT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of H.R. 3684, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 3684) to authorize funds for Federal-aid highways, highway safety programs, and transit programs, and for other purposes.

Pending:

Schumer (for Sinema) amendment No. 2137, in the nature of a substitute.

AMENDMENT NO. 2131 TO AMENDMENT NO. 2137

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, I call up amendment No. 2131 to the substitute and ask that it be reported by number.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the amendment by number.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Delaware [Mr. CARPER] proposes an amendment numbered 2131.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To strike a definition)

On page 1941, strike lines 7 through 11.

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

H.R. 3684

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, yesterday evening, as everyone knows, the group of bipartisan Senators working on infrastructure finished the text of the bill. I immediately moved to make that text the base of the bill here on the floor, as promised.

Last night, Democrats offered to begin the amendment process right away. There are three bipartisan amendments to the bill ready to consider. Two were led by Republicans: a Rounds-Smith amendment and Thune-Tester amendment, and another from Senators PADILLA and MORAN.

Let me be clear. These three amendments would constitute only the first

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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tranche of potential amendments. The Senate can and should consider more amendments afterward.

I encourage Senators from both sides of the aisle to submit potential amendments to the bill. And, as we have already done several times this year—on the anti-Asian hate crimes bill and the U.S. Innovation and Competition Act, just to name two examples—the majority will work with the minority to put together packages of amendments for the Senate to vote on.

At the moment, we need consent from our Republican colleagues to start the amendment process, and we await their answer. I hope we can use our time in the Senate efficiently.

Let's start voting on amendments. The longer it takes to finish the bill, the longer we will be here.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Republican leader is recognized.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, a number of our colleagues in both parties worked through the weekend to finalize their draft agreement on a major bill for our Nation's infrastructure. I want to thank the Senators who worked hard and long to get this effort this far already.

I am confident that out of the 100 of us who serve in this body, 100 will be able to find parts of the legislation that we wish were different. But I believe our colleagues' draft text provides a good and important jumping-off point for what needs to be a robust and bipartisan process out here on the floor.

Infrastructure is exactly the kind of subject that Congress should be able to address across the aisle. Roads, bridges, waterways, airports—these things are not luxuries for the greatest Nation in world history. They are necessities.

Necessarily, legislation like this will be big and complex. It will necessarily affect all 50 States. That is why, while I salute the hard work of our colleagues who produced the base text that is now before us, their conversations can't be the Senate's last word. Senators on both sides expect and deserve opportunities to have a say and to put their own State's imprints on this major bill.

Just as infrastructure itself is not a luxury but a necessity, the same goes for the Senate having a robust and bipartisan amendment process on legislation of this magnitude.

Our full consideration of this bill must not be choked off by any artificial timetable that our Democratic col-

leagues may have penciled out for political purposes. Our bipartisan negotiators have already been taking this task very seriously. The American people need the Senate to continue taking it seriously, as well.

On another matter, this bipartisan work on infrastructure just reinforces the recklessness of the purely partisan taxing-and-spending spree the Democrats want to ram through next.

Even before we get to this week, there is ample evidence the Senate is fully capable of passing policies that are actually smart, that actually make things better for American families, and to do so with bipartisan majorities. A year and a half ago, the Senate turned a blank sheet of paper into the CARES Act that saved our healthcare system, saved our economy, and poured money into Operation Warp Speed to help unlock vaccines in record time—overwhelming bipartisan support.

A year ago, we passed the Great American Outdoors Act, a historic investment in our Nation's national parks and national treasures—another very large bipartisan vote. Last December, there was yet another bipartisan COVID rescue package, and just a few months ago, Senators once again compromised and passed a big bipartisan bill addressing American competitiveness versus China.

There is nothing stopping policies from earning bipartisan support here in the Senate, when they deserve it. Bills that deserve to pass the Chamber are not having a hard time passing.

So the fact that our Democratic colleagues will immediately pivot to a staggering, reckless, tax-and-spend spree that will not earn a single Republican vote, well, that tells Americans everything they need to know.

This 50–50 Senate, a very narrowly divided House, and a President who promised unity and togetherness have decided they want to respond to an environment of uncertainty and inflation with a sprawling \$3.5 trillion socialist shopping list and a huge set of painful tax hikes. That is their plan. Our friend and colleague, the junior Senator from Vermont, may not have won the Democratic Presidential nomination, but his ideology sure has won the war.

So, in the next few days, the Democratic leader says they will start the process of ramming through this awful, awful package. They want to respond to a border crisis with amnesty. They want to respond to runaway inflation and soaring costs for families with even more reckless spending, printing, and borrowing. They want to respond to a growing worker shortage by turning a tax credit for working parents into permanent welfare with no work requirement. They want to respond to an uneasy economic recovery with massive tax hikes and a whole catalog of Green New Deal mandates and regulations so Washington bureaucrats can run the country.

So, if what Senate Democrats are planning to do next were a good idea, it

would read like one; and it would smell like one; and it wouldn't require a hyperpartisan high-wire act from Senate Democrats to pull it off.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority whip.

SOCIALISM

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, "socialism," it is a label we hear a lot. It has been around a while—a long time—but in American politics, it is kind of applied in an unusual way. The notion that every American would pay into an insurance fund so that everyone who retired could live in basic dignity—we called it Social Security as Democrats; the Republicans called it socialism.

Do they want to remove Social Security as a socialist program? I don't know. I listened carefully as the Republican leader started talking about the weaknesses of the Democratic philosophy.

And then, in the 1960s, Lyndon Baines Johnson looked around America and saw a new class of impoverished Americans growing by the day. They were our parents and grandparents. And he decided one of their biggest problems was paying for their medical expenses and their prescription drugs eventually. So he proposed a Federal program called Medicare for everyone who reached the age of 65 in America, regardless of whether they were rich or poor. Boy, think about that.

The critics called that socialism—the notion that we would help everybody, that we would collect money during their work experience and then take care of our parents and grandparents so they could live longer, more independently. Socialism.

Now, we are discussing—and we are at an early stage—changing that Medicare Program to extend its benefits to include fundamental and basic things that have been sitting there for decades waiting to be addressed. Eyeglasses, hearing aids, dental work—we know what a difference those things make in the lives of everyone but how critically important they are to those who are elderly.

And, yes, the junior Senator from Vermont has proposed that we extend Medicare benefits to include those protections, but he is not alone. Moderates within the Democratic caucus across the board agree, it is time to take a serious look at that, and the Republican leader tells us we are flirting with socialism again.

I don't think that a poor, elderly person without dentures who can't eat their food can be ignored—or that helping them is socialism.

I might add one thing that is important. He cites the CARES Act. I remember it well. It was a little over a year ago, it was last year. The pandemic was just kicking off, and it was proposed. This CARES Act, it was over \$1 trillion. It might have been the biggest bill when it was passed. It was proposed with the Trump administration, with a Democratic Congress, and it ended up with a strong bipartisan roll-call. I voted for it. Virtually every

Democratic Senator joined every Republican Senator to make it a reality: billions of dollars to deal with the pandemic. Socialist? I don't think so. It was America coming together to address a crisis. That is exactly what happened.

So what happened when we had a new President, when Donald Trump was gone—and, yes, he is gone, despite the fact that he doesn't know it. What happened when we had a new President who decided he wanted to put together a rescue plan? This rescue plan addressed some fundamentals. It addressed the promise that Donald Trump made, that \$1,400 was coming to families. Really? Sounds socialistic to me.

But it was the Trump idea and it was the Biden rescue plan that pulled it off.

And the vaccines—and we can only thank the Lord and the great researchers who put that together—but it was only just a theory and inventory. But President Biden found a way to administer the COVID-19 vaccines across America, a dramatic effort. That was paid for by the American Rescue Plan. And the money loans for businesses to get started after the pandemic, money for schools to make sure they are safe when the kids return to them this fall. When the American Rescue Plan was put together by President Biden and offered in this Chamber, I am sorry to report that not one Republican Senator supported it. I hope they have had second thoughts since then. Administering the vaccines has given us hope in America, and I hope more people will take advantage of it. But that was bipartisanship that really hit the rocks. It took the Democrats and KAMALA HARRIS to make a difference.

When I hear about socialism and bipartisanship from the other side, how far would they go in ending programs which have historically been labeled as “socialistic”?

H.R. 3684

Mr. President, on a completely different topic but somehow related, Senators spend a lot of time in airports and in airplanes, even in COVID-19 times. The Presiding Officer knows that well. I spend a lot of time in airports. O'Hare, I can take you on a tour. Springfield is a small airport. Reagan National Airport here, I am familiar with it as well.

But I always thought to myself, as I traveled years ago, that one of the worst airports in America, sadly, was LaGuardia. Oh, what a wreck. LaGuardia was just way underutilized and lacked all the modern developments we expect at an airport, but, lo and behold, that has changed. LaGuardia is finished now, and it is beautiful. It has many things that many airports would only aspire to have, as it should, because it is not only serving a great city, but it is also named after a great man, Fiorello La Guardia.

He stood 5-foot-2, but he was a giant. As mayor of New York City during the

Great Depression and World War II, he took on political corruption and organized crime. He did some things that are still talked about. When the newspaper workers went on strike, he read the funnies to the kids so they could keep up with them.

He did something else, too. He oversaw investment in public works, including investments in roads, highways, and tunnels, that changed the landscape of America's largest city.

Fiorello La Guardia famously said: “There is no Democrat or Republican way to fix a pothole.”

He understood, when it comes to the most basic responsibilities of government, political labels shouldn't matter. Building and maintaining roads and bridges helps all of us.

I think Mayor Fiorello La Guardia would be happy to know that we have created a blueprint for America's economic future. Against the odds, we now have before us a bipartisan plan to build the physical backbone of the 21st century American economy. In these times when there is so much political disagreement, just getting this far is a remarkable achievement. I look forward to a productive debate and hopefully a vote this week. I am hopeful we can meet the deadline because the fact is, America can't wait any longer for this Senate to take action. Our roads and bridges are crumbling beneath our feet.

Last week, I brought to this floor a photo of a bridge that collapsed 2 weeks ago in a small rural town in Illinois known as Seneca. A man was driving his pickup truck across the bridge when the bridge collapsed. The picture showed his red pickup truck precariously straddling the two halves of the broken bridge. Luckily, some Good Samaritans came to his rescue.

Any of us, at any time, could be that man on the bridge. More than 47,000 American bridges are judged to be structurally deficient, including 2,000 in my State of Illinois. The legislation we are voting on this week will start to repair them. It includes the largest investment in American bridges since the creation of the Interstate Highway System. Imagine that.

It also includes the largest investment in clean water infrastructure ever. Do we need it? Well, think of Flint, MI, and think of the story today in the Chicago papers about the discovery of PFOS contamination in water supplies across my State. That isn't all.

We can replace the old lead service lines that poison drinking water. So many homes and businesses and schools and churches are served by lead pipe service lines, and there is no tolerable amount of lead that can be in water.

I want to thank my colleague TAMMY DUCKWORTH. She has been a real leader on this issue, and I think all of us owe her a debt of gratitude that it is included in this legislation.

Chicago has more miles of lead water pipes than any city in America. I am

not bragging. I am just stating facts. But Chicago isn't alone. These lead pipes are in big cities and small towns all across the Nation. Listen to this.

The bipartisan plan includes the largest investment in passenger rail since the creation of Amtrak in the 1960s. You know President Joe Biden wouldn't forget Amtrak, nor would TOM CARPER or CHRIS COONS. It is the largest investment in public transit in American history. I was just out at the ribbon-cutting—well, several recently in Chicago. Naturally, people were not riding the CTA and Metro and other rail opportunities as they once did because of COVID-19, but it is coming back, and we want to make sure those stations are safe and make sure they are accessible for people with disabilities.

With this bill, in my State, the Chicago Transit Authority and transit agencies downstate will be able to buy new, more efficient buses and railcars and modernize tracks and rail stations. It will expand the capacity of the blue line at O'Hare, completing the red line south extension, which has been a dream for decades.

This plan includes \$25 billion to modernize Illinois' airports, including money for O'Hare's terminal expansion. Believe me, we can use it. We have done a lot with the runways—magnificent investments there. Now, we have got to make sure the terminals keep up with that modernization.

Remember the cargo ship that ran aground at the Suez Canal, causing major delays worldwide in shipping, costing companies and, ultimately, customers millions of dollars? Well, this infrastructure plan will keep America's economy moving and our shipping lanes open by modernizing our ports, locks, and dams.

We are not just repairing old infrastructure; we are building new infrastructure. This plan includes the largest investment in clean energy in infrastructure in America's history. If there was ever a moment in time—with the world literally burning up—for us to get serious about climate change, this is that moment, and this investment responds to it.

In America, the biggest source of greenhouse gases is transportation. We can change it. This plan is a start.

In the town of Normal, IL—yes, there is a Normal, IL—a company called Rivian bought an old, abandoned Mitsubishi automobile factory 5 years ago. They now have started production on electric cars and delivery vans, the cars of the future.

Is this going to go anywhere? Does anybody believe in electric vehicles? Well, 15 percent of Rivian is owned by Ford Motor Company. If you have heard of a company called Amazon, they invested \$1 billion in Rivian. They ordered 120,000 delivery vans. There are 2,000 people working there now, twice the number who were working when Mitsubishi left. They aspire to double

that number again and to make production really accessible all across the country.

That is not the only story I could tell about electric vehicles. Illinois is in a position to be a global leader in electric cars. Argonne National Laboratory in the Chicagoland area has really led American research in battery technology and recycling batteries. That is the future. If you don't believe me, just watch the ads on television where they are advertising the new Ford F-150 Lightning, an electric truck. They don't have any available now, but they invite you to sign up to buy one next year.

With this plan, we can build a network of electric vehicle charging stations, where drivers can charge their cars for a fraction of what it costs to fill a gas tank today and without the harmful emissions. It really is the future that we are trying to assist with this important infrastructure bill.

Importantly, this plan will help connect every American to reliable high-speed internet. Over 60 percent of the American people say that access to high-speed internet is as important as electricity to them and some say it is even more important than water. It has become that integral to a successful life for business. No matter where you live, the internet puts the world at your fingertips. Your children can learn from home, you can connect to healthcare providers when you need them, and businesses can reach the global marketplace.

One last point. This plan will help us protect America's infrastructure, our economy, and American families from 21st-century threats of climate change, extreme weather, and cyber attacks. It is the largest investment in resilience of physical and natural systems in American history.

With this plan, we can create thousands of good-paying, family-supporting jobs, and the majority of these jobs may not require a college degree. Perhaps that 2 extra years of community college, which we hope to include in the next bill, will be just what a person needs to get a good-paying job, settle down, and raise a family—the American dream. And we can lay the foundation for a long-term economic boom if everyone pulls together.

These are smart, prudent, necessary investments that will pay dividends for years to come. I want to thank the President. He was really all in in the negotiation of this bill. Without his leadership, we wouldn't be here. I also want to thank the bipartisan group of Senators who worked with the White House to produce this agreement. I have come to know them. I participated in some of the early meetings and listened to them through the deliberation. There were times when I wanted to wring their necks, and there were times when I wanted to pat their backs. But they never quit trying, and today, we have a bill before us that is a dramatic achievement, and it is a bipartisan achievement.

I think the number was 17 of the Republicans who voted for us to move forward on this debate. I hope those 17 can hold together with the Democrats to see this bill to its successful conclusion.

Remember Fiorello La Guardia's statement that there is no Democratic or Republican way to fill a pothole? But there is a smart way to build the physical backbone of an economy. This is the right start. This bipartisan plan hits the sweet spot. I thank our many Republican colleagues who have joined with the Democrats to advance this debate. Isn't that what America has been waiting for?

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. CARPER. While he is still on the floor, I want to thank my friend and colleague. He and I came together in the House of Representatives a million years ago. We were part of the class of 1982, a huge class—over 80 Democrats and Republicans. It has been a joy to serve with him, and I especially am proud of him—the words he has just said here today, healing words, uniting words—and we are grateful for his leadership.

Colleagues, the Senate is now considering the substitute amendment to H.R. 3684, the INVEST Act, and I rise today to urge our colleagues to join Senator CAPITO, who is sitting to my right, and me in debating the legislation, offering improvements where needed to it, and then voting for its adoption.

In February of this year, at my encouragement, President Biden invited Senator CAPITO, Senators CARDIN, INHOFE, and me, all senior members of the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works, over to the White House right after he was inaugurated President to discuss the need to make bold investments in our Nation's crumbling infrastructure.

Sitting in the Oval Office that day, as I am sure the ranking member of our committee remembers, we were joined in person by the Vice President of the United States, KAMALA HARRIS, and we were joined virtually by Secretary of Transportation Pete Buttigieg. I still want to call him Mayor Pete, but he has actually turned out to be a pretty good Secretary of Transportation as well.

Because of our committee's long-standing tradition of bipartisan work on infrastructure, my colleagues and I already knew as we headed into the White House meeting that our Nation had fallen woefully short—woefully short—in maintaining and developing the critical infrastructure that supports us, our families, and our economy. But don't take my word for it. Don't take my word for it. The American Society of Civil Engineers' 2021 report card for America's infrastructure gave our Nation's infrastructure an overall grade of C-minus. In recent years, that rating has been as low as D-

plus, a D, D-minus. Still, a C-minus is nothing to brag about; rather, it is a wake-up call to get our act together at a time, if you will, to move it on up. Move it on up.

That is what our new President called on us to do that day in order to help America move on up and move ahead. Without casting aspersions or affixing blame, he made it clear that America hadn't been getting the job done on this front for years and that by working together—working together—we could do something about it, while creating millions of new jobs—a lot of them without college degrees—at the same time.

He asked us—leaders on the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works—he asked us to help jump-start the effort by getting to work on crafting and reporting to the full Senate surface transportation legislation, along with legislation to repair and upgrade drinking water and water sanitation infrastructure, as soon as we could.

Working together with all 20 members of the Environment and Public Works Committee—10 Democrats, 10 Republicans—that is exactly what we did in record time and with record levels, historic levels, of investment.

After soliciting input, I am sure my colleague from West Virginia recalls, from all 50 States—all 50 States—we crafted and then unanimously forwarded our water infrastructure bill out of committee to the full Senate—unanimously. There, it was debated, amended, and adopted by a vote of 89 to 2—89 to 2; you don't hear that every day—on April 29, 2021.

With that behind us, we turned our attention to surface transportation legislation—roads, highways, bridges, climate—and unanimously reported our surface transportation bill to the full Senate by Memorial Day, the fastest the committee has ever acted, I am told, on such legislation.

I have thanked Senator CAPITO so many times, she is probably getting sick of it, but I want to thank her again, and I want to thank every member of our committee with whom we were privileged to serve on the Environment and Public Works Committee, along with the members of our staffs, some of whom are gathered here today, for their remarkable work on these important, bipartisan bills.

Speaking of staff, I look over my shoulder, and I see of our people right behind me. I look over the other shoulder, and I see some Republican staff over on the other side.

I especially want to pause and just thank our Environment and Public Works staff director, Mary Frances Repko; our chief counsel, Greg Dotson; as well as Rebecca Higgins, who leads our transportation team; and Kenneth Martin and Jordan Baugh as well.

A special thank-you to John Kane and Annie D'Amato, who ably led our efforts on water infrastructure; to Laura Haynes Gillam, our leader on

climate; and finally to my indefatigable chief of staff, Emily Spain. I practiced that word all night to make sure I got it right.

I hasten to add that we couldn't get any of this done without Senator CAPITO and the strong, bipartisan support we received from her, from the EPW minority staff director—I see him sitting over there—Adam Tomlinson—Adam, thank you—and his hard-working team; I won't mention them all, but Murphie Barrett, affectionately known as Murphie Brown, and Travis Cone and Jess Kramer.

You know, you would expect the chair of the Environment and Public Works Committee or the ranking member to be proud of their committee's work, and we certainly are, but we aren't the only ones who have worked hard to write the legislation that is before us today, not by a long shot.

I want to commend the bipartisan work of the Commerce Committee and the Energy and Natural Resources Committee, along with the efforts of the Banking Committee.

I especially want to thank the bipartisan group we affectionately refer to—Senator DURBIN already has—affectionately refer to them, at least most of the time, as the G-22, led by Senators ROB PORTMAN of Ohio and KYRSTEN SINEMA of Arizona. I want to thank them and the other 20 Senators—half Democrat, half Republican—for their Herculean efforts to make this compromise legislation a reality; working not just with folks here and over in the House but also at the White House as well, with the President and the President's team.

In the Navy, we have—one of my favorite sayings in the Navy is “Bravo Zulu.” When somebody does extraordinary work, what we would say is “Bravo Zulu.” I would certainly say that on this occasion.

Of course, we all recognize that infrastructure encompasses much more than water, roads, highways, and bridges. In truth, it touches on the jurisdictions of many of our committees—many of our committees. That is why the legislation we are considering today is extraordinary. It is a comprehensive infrastructure investment package that encompasses water, highways, roads, bridges, transit, rail, airports, ports, power systems, dams, broadband, cyber security, ecosystem restoration, and more.

I would like to pause here for just a moment to remind all of us who serve in this body, along with the people we are privileged to represent, that infrastructure is also intensely personal, and when it does not work, our people suffer, their children suffer, and their livelihoods suffer. We all know that those who suffer most are those who have been shortchanged by the patently inadequate investments we have made for too many years.

In rural parts of Southern Delaware, communities like Ellendale have struggled for years to find and afford safe al-

ternatives to increasingly polluted drinking water wells. Ellendale is not alone. Across our country, hundreds, maybe thousands of communities struggle with access to clean water and wastewater treatment, including my native West Virginia, now represented by our colleagues SHELLEY CAPITO and JOE MANCHIN.

Our communities across this country are torn asunder by—too many places across this country are torn asunder by highways that have divided and disrupted neighborhoods across our Nation. In my hometown of Wilmington, DE, construction of I-95 literally tore communities apart, cutting off access to neighbors, parks, and economic opportunity. We can begin to heal those wounds—in places like Baltimore and Philadelphia as well—heal those wounds with the projects we enable in this legislation.

The truth be known, almost all of our colleagues have stories like this to share—communities beset by raging wildfires fueled by climate change; thousands of acres of farmland lost to flooding; more than a third of the crops in Iowa destroyed by hurricane-force winds last year; kids without access to the internet for want of broadband access; and families struggling to deal with legacy pollutants in the land and water where they live.

In the near future, I hope we will take some time to celebrate the significant steps we are taking to rewrite these stories with this legislation before us. But I want to take a moment or two here today, if I may, to drill down into some of the most meaningful provisions reported unanimously out of our committee, the Environment and Public Works Committee, this year. Let's start with the Drinking Water and Wastewater Infrastructure Act of 2021.

It is clear that the programs we have now, despite our best efforts, aren't sufficient to meet the needs of many of our communities, particularly those who simply can't afford to participate in the revolving loan programs of their States in order to upgrade increasingly inadequate drinking water and wastewater facilities.

As our ranking member knows, if communities borrow money out of the revolving funds, water funds—one for drinking water and one for sanitation, water sanitation—the communities that borrow money, take money out of them, they are expected to pay that money back. There are, as we know, a lot of communities that are just too impoverished to ever do that. We have decided not just to bemoan that but to actually do something about it. That is what we have done with this legislation—provide them with an opportunity to receive a grant to clean up their water, their drinking water, and to deal with their wastewater. Millions of Americans are going to be able to do that, to deal with these challenges, and we are going to help.

This bipartisan legislation works to address this crisis by authorizing more

than \$55 billion—\$55 billion—for programs that will create jobs and make our communities healthier by building, repairing, upgrading, and modernizing our Nation's aging drinking water and wastewater infrastructure systems—\$55 billion dollars.

Here is how. First, the measure takes the historic step of reauthorizing the Clean Water State Revolving Loan Fund for the first time in 35 years—35 years. It does so while increasing funding levels for the first time since 1987.

This legislation also reauthorizes the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund, a program whose reauthorization expires at the end of this year. You will recall that this is the fund that helps to ensure that clean water flows from our faucets when we turn on the spigot.

To help resolve a historic injustice in water infrastructure investment, more than 40 percent of this bill's investments are targeted to help disadvantaged communities. The bill appropriates \$15 billion in new funding to replace lead service lines. And particularly for our country's rural areas, including Native Alaskan villages, Tribal communities, and low-income neighborhoods, our bill invests another \$1 billion in programs to connect households to drinking water and wastewater systems and services.

This legislation does far more than just fix what is broken. To borrow a phrase from our President, it truly does enable us to build back better by fortifying water infrastructure in the face of our new and worsening climate reality.

Sadly—sadly—our future is one with more severe weather events like hurricanes, like floods, droughts, and bitterly cold weather. I wish it weren't true, but it is. It is a future with ever more people living on the frontlines of sea level rise, like Louisiana, which, on average, if you can believe this, Louisiana loses a piece of land to the sea roughly the size of a football field every 100 minutes—every 100 minutes.

To that end, the bill before us provides a combined \$500 million to make our water infrastructure system more resilient and more adaptable in the face of extreme weather events. Within that historic investment is a new \$125 million program which will for the first time provide grants to communities seeking to fortify their wastewater systems against climate change's impacts.

This is not just a bill to spend and build but legislation that will direct our Agencies to build and spend more wisely. We know that investment and innovation as envisioned in this bill before us can have a profound impact on our economy, creating jobs and fostering growth for entire communities. We can, in short, seize the day in the face of so much adversity. Seize the day. Carpe diem—or, as we say in Delaware, Carper diem.

It is fair to say there is also much we can and will do to invest in our Nation's highways, roads, and bridges. Our Surface Transportation Reauthorization Act increases the baseline for

funding our surface transportation programs by more than one-third to \$303 billion over the next 5 years—\$303 billion. On top of that, the legislation will invest over \$60 billion in new funds for roads, bridges, and multimodal programs over these 5 years. This investment will repair and rebuild our roads and bridges with a new focus on climate change mitigation, resilience, equity, and safety for all users, including cyclists and pedestrians.

Every day, motorists cross bridges in poor conditions in too many parts of our country 170 million times. Every day. Every day. A hundred and seventy million times a day. Some 40 percent of the bridges in our country are in need of repair or replacement, including nearly 500 bridges in Massachusetts, 3,000 in Pennsylvania, and God knows, more in our State as well.

At the current pace of investment in bridges, it would take nearly 40 years—40 years—to tackle the current backlog of bridges in poor condition. That is right—40 years. That is why today we consider legislation to provide a \$40 billion investment to address our daunting bridge repair backlog.

Our legislation also includes for the first time in a Senate reauthorization bill a climate title with provisions dedicated to curbing harmful greenhouse gas emissions, while ensuring that the investments we make are more resilient to climate change-enhanced extreme weather events because, like it or not, it is coming our way.

As many of you know, the transportation sector is the largest source of carbon emissions in our Nation; almost 30 percent just from one source: cars, trucks, and vans. If we want to save our planet, and we do, for our children and grandchildren, we have to tackle this major contributor to the climate crisis with a special zeal.

The bill we marked up in our committee, the Environment and Public Works Committee, this spring by, again, a 20-to-0 vote put us on the right track, dedicating \$18 billion toward reducing our carbon emissions and including \$2.5 billion for building electric vehicle charging and hydrogen fueling stations on highways and in locations like schools, workplaces, parks, and publicly accessible areas for communities. This bill also adds another \$5 billion for EV charging and hydrogen fueling stations to help us transition to a zero-emission future.

A lot of people have heard about and talked about electric vehicle charging stations. Not so many people have mentioned hydrogen. Hydrogen is a big part and will play a major role in reducing our carbon emissions, particularly with mid-sized trucks and larger trucks, and also when we talk about reducing carbon emissions in the industrial sector. So stay tuned. There is a lot more to come on that front.

A great thing about our clean hydrogen investment in vehicles propelled with hydrogen, with the technology

that we have developed, it creates an emission from these vehicles, but it is water, H₂O. I am told it is water we can actually drink. Think about that.

We can also drive down emissions and curb pollution by supporting convenient, healthy alternatives to driving. Bicycling and walking are not only affordable modes of transportation but healthy ones as well—an important consideration in a nation where all too many Americans are dying from medical conditions tied to obesity.

Sadly, far too many Americans live in neighborhoods where there are no safe bike lanes and crosswalks. Tragically, in 2019 alone, over 7,000 pedestrians and bicyclists lost their lives in traffic accidents—over 7,000 pedestrians. I would wager that many Members of this body actually knew one or more than one of those victims or their families personally. So I am grateful that our bill works to address these needless deaths head-on. The question is, How? By providing a 70-percent increase in funding for programs that develop safe, accessible pedestrian and bicycle pathways across our Nation and by authorizing almost \$17 billion in funding for highway safety improvements.

I also want to note here some of the critical investments in infrastructure that are outside of the EPW Committee jurisdiction and the important work that those committees did to bring this bill to the floor.

First, a note of appreciation for the portion of the legislation that was authored by the Senate Commerce Committee, led by Senators MARIA CANTWELL and ROGER WICKER. As one of the tens of thousands of Americans who commute to work on the east coast by taking Amtrak almost daily, I am encouraged to see that this bill invests in our railways across the Nation. This legislation not only provides \$6 billion in grants to the Northeast Corridor to address Amtrak's deferred maintenance needs, it also provides another \$16 billion for Amtrak's national network and another \$41 billion in grants to improve passenger rail performance and safety.

I also want to applaud the chairman of the Senate Banking Committee and others both on and off the committee who worked tirelessly to advance robust funding for public transit infrastructure in order to make it possible for millions of people to get to work and home again every day.

Transit and rail are both critical components of our climate change response, providing low- and zero-emission travel choices. This bill, our bill, reauthorizes and grows our transit programs, while also providing more than \$5 billion in grants for State and local agencies to purchase electric and low-emission transit buses.

Our colleagues on the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, led by Senators MANCHIN and BARRASSO, crafted legislation to help support and clean up our Nation's energy infra-

structure. Investments made in this bill will work to make our electric grid more reliable and resilient, support families and businesses to become more energy efficient, while helping to clean up our Nation's old and abandoned mines and wells that leak toxic pollution and methane emissions.

The bill before us this week also includes investments in battery recycling and zero-emitting technologies, including a program much like the one passed out of our EPW Committee last year that supports our existing nuclear power fleet, which collectively produces—get this—half of our Nation's carbon-free electricity.

While there is much to celebrate in this product of our bipartisan efforts, more work still needs to be done. Collectively, we have incorporated badly needed climate provisions in surface transportation, water, power, and a number of other infrastructure programs, but in truth, we have, in the words of Robert Frost, miles to go before we sleep—miles to go before we sleep.

With the words of Robert Frost as a reminder, all of us who serve here together understand that every race won begins with a first step and ends with a final one. With the enactment of this legislation, we will be taking not one but a number of important steps—a number of important steps.

In the days ahead, we will move a good deal closer to the finish line in a race with a dangerously changing climate that we simply cannot afford to lose. That is why I will be examining the budget resolution closely in the days ahead to ensure that we are devoting the resources necessary to put climate change on the run as we advance environmental justice.

I would be remiss if I didn't add that we must not shy away in the days ahead from working hard to agree on how to honestly and thoughtfully pay for the investments that need to be made. In the words of a colleague from West Virginia—words of a former State treasurer of a small State on the east coast who now serves in this body, "Things that are worth having are worth paying for."

But the key message of this day is that we have pushed through earnest disagreements, varying priorities, and much headache and heartache to achieve a truly singular success in taking on a number of major infrastructure challenges facing our Nation. We have elected to work together to address the obvious—to repair and upgrade much of our Nation's infrastructure in order to better position America to succeed in an ever more competitive global economy and to survive in an ever more dangerous world due to the climate crisis.

Senator CAPITO and I have served together on this Committee for a number of years, and she succeeds Senator JOHN BARRASSO, who for a number of years was the chair and I was the ranking member. I will never forget—and

you probably won't either, Senator—we won't forget the words of attorney Rob Wallace, who is also from Wyoming, a friend of Senator BARRASSO's, and he was nominated, I think, to be Assistant Secretary of the Interior. He focused on, among other things, national parks, wildlife, and fish and wildlife. I never forget what he said in his confirmation hearing. He commented on the history and the tradition of our committee as one where we actually work together and like each other even though we don't always agree on the issues. We work together to get things done. He said these words. He said: "Bipartisan solutions are lasting solutions." That is what he said. "Bipartisan solutions are lasting solutions." I thought at the time, well, he really nailed it. And I hope, with this legislation, we will nail it, too, because a lot of Americans are counting on us to do just that.

With that, I am happy to yield the floor again to—I am tempted to call her our wingwoman; she calls me her wingman—to my colleague and friend and ranking member of this committee, who has been great to work with.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. WARNOCK). The Senator from West Virginia.

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. President, I want to begin by thanking the chairman of our EPW Committee. We work tremendously well together.

He gave a great speech right there, outlining not only the difficulties that we had reaching consensus but really how the building blocks of what we are embarking on today really came from the bipartisanship that we have shown at EPW with our surface transportation and our water bills.

I think, you know, by having those building blocks in place, it has led us to where we are today.

And I do remember that first meeting with President Biden in the White House. It is not every day you get to go to the White House and sit in the Oval Office and talk to the President of the United States and Vice President. But we started out with basically saying that we can do this, we want to do this, and bipartisanship can work, particularly on areas that we traditionally work together on, but also on areas that are of critical need to our country. And we never really sort of lost our focus on that, and neither did the President.

So here we are today, really meeting that challenge that he sort of laid down before us over 6 months ago. And with the building blocks that us and Commerce and others have put into place, we find ourselves with the great hard work of the bipartisan group and a great place of—at a point at which we can discuss these, amend these, and look at these on the Senate floor, as we should be doing.

So after months and months of negotiating, the time is finally here. A lot

of people, in pun, said we would never get here. As a matter of fact, I had an interview on national TV about 3 or 4 months ago, when I was leading the effort for the Republicans, and the commentator said: Well, I will believe bipartisanship on infrastructure when pigs fly.

So watch out. They are flying.

So we are debating this historic bipartisan infrastructure bill. The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act is the product of countless hours, as the chairman said; late nights; and more than a couple of tough conversations. And I want to include not just our staff but a lot of staffs throughout the Senate, whether it is the Finance Committee, Approps Committee, Commerce Committee, Banking Committee, EPW Committee, Energy Committee, all-encompassing—a lot of our staffs have been working through the weekends sleeplessly to try to get us to today.

We debated the definition of infrastructure. We actually talked about that at the White House on the day we went to see the President and what that scope should look like and the pricetag and, very important, how to pay for it.

I think that nobody, probably, of the 100 of us thinks this bill is absolutely perfect. It never would be. And there is always a saying going around that, if we all thought it was perfect, there is something wrong with it.

So delivering for the American people is more important than our newspaper headlines today. We can make a historic investment in our Nation's infrastructure with this bill. It reflects our commitment to keeping Americans safe, as the chairman mentioned; improving our global competitiveness; and growing our economy and creating jobs. This legislation gives States both the certainty in funding to plan for big projects, but also that flexibility in spending to cater to unique needs.

What you need in Georgia is different than what you need in Delaware, or my other colleague from Montana would differ from what we need in West Virginia. This bill is a product that the American people can be proud of and one that will benefit them and the next generation. This is not a one-and-done. The impacts of this bill will go on through a generation.

So after we had the meeting with the President—the bipartisan meeting—the President put out his American Jobs Act. He actually challenged my party, the Republican Party, to come up with a reaction to his American Jobs Plan. And I took up that challenge, along with the ranking members of the relevant committees. So that would be Senators WICKER, TOOMEY, BARRASSO, CRAPO, and Senator BLUNT, and we went back to the White House. And I was talking to Senator CARPER the entire time through this process to make sure that our surface transportation bill, which we were in the midst of negotiating, was going to be the building block on which we could formulate a

bipartisan agreement. And the Drinking Water and Wastewater bill had already passed out this entire body 89 to 2.

So we decided—and the President was very much in the conversation and the will to get this done. So our Drinking Water and Wastewater Infrastructure Act had already passed, as I said, unanimously. We passed it on the floor, 89 to 2. And we were making steady progress on our Surface Transportation Reauthorization bill.

At this point, the talks between the President and me and our working group, as Republicans, began to falter, and the bipartisan group picked up with the President. I am really, really glad and proud of their efforts that they were able to come to an agreement that is before us today. As I am going to reiterate again because I think we are going to be saying this a lot, I am glad that the basis of this are the two bipartisan bills that came out of the EPW Committee.

There are several provisions I would like to highlight as we begin this process.

Roads and bridges are what we think of when we think of infrastructure. We talked a lot about this over the last several months. As ranking member of the EPW Committee, one of my top priorities, along with Chairman CARPER, is the reauthorization of the Surface Transportation Reauthorization bill. We worked painstakingly; and those were a lot of sleepless nights, too, for many of us and our staffs, in particular, to write a bill to meet our transportation needs. And the chairman outlined a lot of what his priorities were, and I am going to talk about some of what the priorities that I had, sharing his priorities as well.

I came to the table with several major priorities for that bill, and I am proud to say that each one of them is in this bill that we are getting ready to consider. I wanted a robust investment in our Nation's roads and bridges. Nothing bugs people more, literally, than driving into a pothole when they know they are paying a gas tax and when they know they are trying to do their best to support their State and local to repair their roads. But it is, I think, the least, I think, that Americans—as they are going to work or going to school or going shopping—would expect that they could be safe as they are traveling.

I came to the table, and we did a robust \$303.5 billion over 5 years for the Federal-Aid Highway Program, which, as the chairman said, is a 35-percent increase over current law. That investment represents historic funding. These are historic levels of funding for our roads and bridges and provides States that long-term certainty that they need to plan and complete a project. I am sure the chairman has projects in his State that have been on the burner, waiting to be done or partially finished, and they can't get the investment because they can't get the

long-term investment that we provided in our bill.

So I specifically made funding for our Nation's bridges a priority. West Virginia has so many bridges. It is a small State, but we have got a lot of hills and valleys, so we need a lot of bridges.

One recent report said that 21 percent of West Virginia's bridges are in poor condition. Another report says that 13 percent of our interstate bridges are in poor condition. So that latter figure of the interstate bridges is the highest one in the Nation. Our bill created a new bridge program. We worked hard with our colleagues to make sure that there is a massive infusion, which there is, on top of what we had in our bill in the appropriations package.

The overall package includes \$40 billion in dedicated resources for bridges. This is the single largest investment in bridge infrastructure since the construction of the Interstate Highway System. This is money that will make a difference for West Virginia and the rest of the Nation.

Second, I wanted to preserve the flexibility for our States and localities to use Federal funds to meet their own unique transportation needs. That priority is reflected in the fact that 90 percent of the EPW bill's funding will be provided to our States through the formula—that means the predictability of the formula that every State has relied on over the last several transportation bills. That is important because it lets States use the Federal dollars to address their own priorities. As I said, we have different priorities, from congestion in urban areas to economic growth in small towns.

And third, I wanted to make sure that all parts of our Nation—not just urban areas, but the rural areas—benefit from transportation grant programs. Rural areas can sometimes struggle when it comes to receiving competitive grants.

It is hard to show cost-benefit analysis. It is hard to show how many people are being served. But these transportation corridors are so vital. That is why I am very pleased that the EPW bill creates a new \$2 billion rural grant program that will dedicate resources to something very important to me—the Appalachian Development Highway System, or the ADHS—and other critical projects across rural America.

We also worked together to provide additional dedicated funding for the ADHS in the broader legislation.

So what does that mean for my home State?

That means that this funding will aid the completion of Corridor H, which is the connector to the eastern and central parts of our State with the Metro and DC area and opening up more opportunities for economic growth and tourism. So if you are coming from the DC area, you can just slice right through the center of the State where you can ski Whitewater, see the beauty of our State, or bring your business.

How about that?

Finally, we hear a lot—everybody hears a lot—from folks back home that it just takes way too long to develop a project. We sometimes think sometimes the bureaucracy is our worst enemy when it comes to building our infrastructure. So we prioritized improvements for the project delivery process to help road and bridge projects advance from the planning stage to the completion stage much more rapidly.

I am excited about reforms we had in our EPW bill. Particularly, our bill codifies the One Federal Decision policy, making it easier for project sponsors to work through the Federal environmental review process—not skirting any environmental review, but just expediting it so it can go quicker, which means more development, more considerations, but also more efficiency on how you spend your dollars.

The EPW bill makes other common-sense reforms, like allowing States to be reimbursed for utility relocation necessary for a project while the review process is ongoing, or even establishing deadlines for Federal Agencies to make decisions.

These are a few examples of the 19 sections included in the robust project delivery section of our EPW bill.

Additional provisions in the broader legislation will extend the FAST-41 permitting reforms to help us build other types of infrastructure more efficiently.

So my key priorities: Robust investment in roads and bridges, flexibility for—and certainty for—our States; resources for rural communities and especially the ADHS, and project delivery improvements are all reflected in the EPW bill and across the broader package we are considering.

I am extremely proud of the work we did on our committee to produce this, and I think it will make significant benefits to our Nation's infrastructure.

I am also going to talk about our Drinking Water and Wastewater Infrastructure Act. The chairman went into more detail on it, but you can see it is very far-reaching. It is the largest, most robust investment in new areas around this very crucial area. We have authorized \$35 billion for water projects across the country with a focus on upgrading aging infrastructure. It invests in innovative technologies and provides assistance to rural and low-income communities to help them keep their water safe and clean. The bill provides that flexibility I talked about so that both rural and urban areas can best address their needs.

The most significant investments are in the Drinking Water and Clean Water State Revolving Funds, otherwise known as SRFs. Our former Governors in the body would know all about SRFs, how important they are. They maximize the authority to the States to determine how best to address their own challenges with a revolving loan fund to facilitate additional future investments.

When this water legislation was voted on by the Senate, 89 Senators supported it. Senators recognized that the legislation will help thousands of communities to improve their health, safety, and standard of living. I am very pleased that this bill before us again is a part of this package—a part of the larger package—so we can make sure that it gets to the President's desk.

I am glad that the overall package we are considering represents the largest investment in clean drinking water in our Nation's history.

It also has some niche things in there that are important to me. Just what we hear anecdotally in our State, we are wasting water in our State. We have leaky old pipes that just leak out 50 percent of the water from the treatment facilities to the home. What a waste. Think about our friends in the West and how precious water is in certain areas. What a wasteful thing that is. So we addressed some of that into our bill.

There are a number of other provisions in this large package that will be significant wins for West Virginia and the Nation. I launched my Capito Connect initiative in 2015, to help expand broadband infrastructure in West Virginia. Many communities that lack adequate broadband service are struggling economically. And I see my fellow Senator from Montana—we had talked about this endlessly on the Commerce Committee and how absolutely important it is.

Many communities that lack adequate broadband service are struggling. It is impossible to compete for new jobs if a community cannot offer good internet service—I mean, it is just a necessity—causing these areas to fall further and further behind. So, today, education, tourism, healthcare, all require high-speed internet service.

Broadband is core infrastructure, and this legislation recognizes that. It is a major broadband investment that will tremendously help close the digital divide in this country. We will get it to the last house. We will get it to the last business.

Additionally, significant funding is included in this package to improve our Nation's airports.

Funding for the Corps of Engineers will improve our water resources infrastructure, our locks and dams. We rely a lot on that as you are going knew down the Ohio Canal, the Big Sandy in through West Virginia.

Reorganization of the AML Program will provide billions of dollars to clean up abandoned mine sites. Another new program will provide resources to clean up orphaned oil and gas wells. Both programs will have a positive effect in this country and particularly in my State.

The items I have highlighted are major wins for West Virginia and the Nation. They are investments in the next generation, ensuring America continues to compete on the global stage.

I would like to thank Senators PORTMAN and SINEMA for their leadership on this legislation and the entire bipartisan working group for their hours and hours of long work.

I would especially like to thank—and we are going to be together a lot here in the next several days—my counterpart, “Carper diem,” Chairman CARPER of the EPW Committee.

I would also like to thank President Biden for his commitment and his willingness to see this bipartisan work product through. I would like to add that I would like to thank the President's staff because I know that they have committed hours and hours to this effort, beginning with me and ending where we are today.

I hope this isn't the end. I mean, I hope this is the beginning of things that we are going to be doing together. I hope this isn't a one-and-done. I hope this is the beginning of all good things.

The American people elected us to do this tough work. Tough compromises are necessary to develop and pass bipartisan bills, and I believe this legislation is a major positive step.

I look forward to working with my colleagues as we begin the amendment process so that we can advance this package.

I would like to join with Chairman CARPER in thanking our staff members who have worked so hard on the EPW bill.

As the Senator mentioned, I see his staff over there and part of my staff over here.

At the risk of picking one of my favorite children off the EPW Committee, I am going to name my entire staff because they all had a hand in this. So I would like to thank Lauren Baker; Murphie Barrett; Libby Callaway; Georgianna Clemmons, who is going to be a mom in about a month; Marli Collier; Travis Cone; Sarah Delavan; Will Dixon; Elizabeth Horner; Max Hyman; Tyler Jenkins; Jess Kramer; Jake Kennedy; Matt Lupes; Kayla McMurry; Taylor Meredith; Jacob Mitchell; Kelley Moore; Katherine Smith; and my staff leader, Adam Tomlinson—I will give him an extra check because he is an amazing person—Travis Voyles; and Andy Zock for their tireless efforts that have helped advance this committee's infrastructure legislation.

On my personal office team, I would like to thank my chief of staff, Joel Brubaker, and JT Jezierski for their leadership.

I say to the Senator that I also want to thank his staff. We have worked really well. You and I work well together, but our staffs really do, I think, rely on one another. And that is the way it should be.

I would like to especially thank Mary Frances Repko because she has devoted many hours and time—she and Adam—I don't know how many times they have talked on the phone, but it is many, many, many—Rebecca Higgins, John Kane, Greg Dotson, Laura

Gilliam, Jordan Baugh, Heather Dean, Mackie McIntosh, Annie D'Amato, Kenneth Martin, and Tyler Hoffman-Reardon for their dedication for this process as well.

With that, I yield the floor.

Mr. CARPER. I am going to ask unanimous consent, if I could just insert one quick comment, Mr. President?

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

Mr. CARPER. Ranking Member Senator CAPITO has mentioned very graciously the names of all of our staff.

I was here this weekend. She was here this weekend. And there were people here working this weekend, not just our staffs on the Environment and Public Works Committee, not just on the Appropriations Committee, just staffs like here in this body. Folks throughout the building, throughout the complex, they were here working. They have children. They have spouses. They have parents. They have other obligations. They were here working. And we would be remiss if we didn't mention that.

The other thing I want to say is, as Ranking Member Senator CAPITO knows, I go back and forth on the train a lot of days, much like Joe Biden used to do. And almost every week somebody says to me on a platform either in Delaware or here in DC waiting for the train: Why can't you guys work together? Why can't you folks just work together?

I just wish that they could be here to participate, to listen, to hear that, actually, we do work together. And when the chips are really down—pandemic, terrible situation, 15, 16, 17 months' ago especially, we worked together in an almost unanimous way. And we are working together here on some things that are extraordinarily important.

The other thing I would say, and I reminded the President of this just the other day, this is not all on the Federal Government. You know, whether it is climate change, whether it is meeting our infrastructure needs, whether it is a pandemic, this is a shared responsibility, and the Federal Government really bears a lot of responsibility.

We have a responsibility especially to lead, but there are States involved. And as a recovering Governor—States were involved, counties, and cities. Nonprofits were involved. And it is all of us working together.

We have a Home Depot just a couple of blocks from our house, Senator CAPITO. And when I think of—whether it is cities and towns or counties where they have responsibilities to meet, I like to say: You can do it; we can help. Like they say at Home Depot: You can do it; we can help. And there is a lot of good help here.

To the folks around the country who need the help, we are going to help. You can do it, but we can help, and we will.

I would just say, in closing—I see the Senator from Montana is here, a great

Member of this body, a great Member from Montana, and a great member of the Approps Committee, and the chair as well. I just want to say thank you for all of your involvement in this effort, all of your involvement, as part of this G-22, with some sanity and some common sense at times when it was really needed and just tenacity.

The fellow who normally stands at this podium is our leader, Senator SCHUMER, our majority leader. He spoke earlier this morning. And Senator MCCONNELL spoke from where Senator CAPITO was speaking. Not everybody expected Senator MCCONNELL, a Republican leader, to vote in favor of the motion to proceed to the bill. He did. And that encouraged others, 16, 17, 18 other Republicans to join in voting for the motion to proceed. We don't proceed unless we have 60 votes, and that was just hugely helpful.

And to CHUCK SCHUMER, who was just—this guy, he just doesn't give up. I have known and worked with him forever, and I am very proud of his leadership. I know he will be glad when this is all over, and he can maybe go home and get a good night's sleep.

But for his family who is willing to share and his kids' willingness to share him with all of us, especially, thanks.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Montana.

Mr. TESTER. Mr. President, I do want to thank Senator CARPER and Senator CAPITO for managing this bill.

I say to the Senators, I very much appreciate what you guys have done up to this point and what you are going to do over the next 3 or 4 days.

Mr. President, I rise today for the same reason that—several months ago, I worked with four other Democrats and five Republicans to try to get something done to address the infrastructure of this country. Why? Because infrastructure is important.

Let me take you back 60 years. Sixty years ago, it was 13½ miles to the closest patch of pavement from my farm. Then, I was about 4 or 5 years old. I remember riding with my dad in a 1954 GMC 300 truck on that dirt road hauling wheat to town as he weaved around piles of gravel that were in the middle of that road.

And I asked my father: Why are those piles of gravel there?

He said: They are working to pave this road.

I said: What does that mean—being a 4-year-old.

He said: Well, remember the stretch of road, the 150 or 200 yards that we drive on to get to the elevator right before the elevator?

And I said: Yes.

This road is going to be all like that.

And I thought, wow.

And it was. It got paved. It got paved for the first 8 miles out of town, and that was pretty neat.

We were 5½ miles from pavement then, which was a great improvement.

Some 10 years later, a little more than 10 years later, that final 4 miles

was paved so that we could access that highway.

So why is that important? That is important because not only did it reduce our costs on the farm in things like tires and pins and bushings and ball joints, but it made our farm more profitable. Because of the investments that my grandfather and my father's generation made, not only did it help them at the time, but it helps me to this day.

That was my first introduction to infrastructure, and that is why, several months ago, I realized that after 15 years in this body and people from both sides of the aisle talking about infrastructure, that it was well past time to get something done on infrastructure because I knew it was economically important; I knew it would create jobs; and I knew it would help sustain communities all across this country.

So what is in this legislation? Why is this legislation so important? Well, let me tell you. It is about the economy. It is about creating jobs. It is about making sure that we can compete in this worldwide economy that we live in, how we can maintain our position as the world's premier economy in this world.

So how does it do it? Well, it starts by repairing and modernizing our roads and bridges, our airports, our transit systems. That is critically important for an economy.

In my particular case, I live a long ways away from our customer base. So when I jump in the truck and I go to town and I use that piece of pavement that was put down 50 years ago, that is important. When I cross that bridge that crosses the Marias River, when I haul grain to Fort Benton or Great Falls—without that bridge, I couldn't access my markets. Without those highways, I cannot access my markets. So it is critically important we keep our aging bridges and roads and airports up to snuff.

And then, this also makes an incredibly important investment in our aging water systems. Where I come from, they call it dryland agriculture. This year, it is a little dryer than we want because we are in the middle of a drought. But the truth is, even if you are looking for drinking water or irrigation water or any water, it is hard to come by.

As our Native American friends have told us many, many times, water is life. And so infrastructure to get water to the point where we can utilize it is critically important. This bill is a major investment in water infrastructure.

And I would say one other thing. Whether you live in the West or whether you live in the East, our water systems in this country are worn out because we haven't done what our parents and grandparents have done. We have allowed them to decay without investing in this infrastructure, which is what we are doing today with this package.

Then we talk about broadband, which, if we can get this bill across the line, I believe it will fix the broadband accessibility issues in this country.

We came through the pandemic, and we saw how important broadband was for distance learning, for telehealth, for opportunities for businesses to expand their customer base. This bill will help expand high-speed internet throughout this country, both urban and rural.

I will tell you, there is a lot of work that needs to be done in my home State of Montana when it comes to broadband.

Then there is the grid. If we are going to move forward with electric vehicles—and they are coming—then we have to have an electrical grid that will support those electric vehicles. Without improvements to the electrical grid, we will be behind the eight ball all the time when it comes to, for example, the electric pickup that Ford is putting out.

I will say, in my lifetime, I will probably have an electric tractor on the farm because this technology is moving so quickly that it is real.

This package does much more than that. I just wanted to touch on those few things. But it is done without increasing your taxes, which is really important because, right now, as we see our economy moving forward, we need to keep it going in that direction.

Ultimately, as I said before, this bill comes down to the economy; it comes down to creating jobs and putting America to work; and it is about our national security. It allows us to be able to compete with China in a way that we are losing right now.

I have heard people come to the floor and say: Do you know what? Infrastructure is good, but we don't need it. We don't need it right now.

Well, all I have to say is, if you believe that, take the keys to the car out of your pocket—known as our economy—and give them to China, because you are giving this economy away, and you are going to make China the leading economic power in this world.

Then there is the issue of bipartisan-ship that has been talked about a lot today already. The truth is this bill has made some news because Democrats and Republicans actually worked together. They actually compromised. Nobody got everything they want, but everybody won.

And as I have told many media outlets, this shouldn't be news, but in this day and age, it is. Hopefully, this will set an example so that we can have much more bipartisan legislation going forward.

And, in that regard, I want to thank my colleagues for their dedication to this effort over the last several months, the G-10—Senators PORTMAN, SINEMA, COLLINS, WARNER, ROMNEY, MANCHIN, CASSIDY, SHAHEEN, MURKOWSKI—all of you folks who sat with me in the same room, and we battled it out. Sometimes, the conversation has

been fun. Sometimes, it has not been so much fun. But the truth is every one of these folks wanted to get to yes, and in the end we did get to yes.

I want to thank Senator SCHUMER. I want to thank him for his patience, not something that he is known for. But he has been incredibly patient as this bill has been debated and changed and moved forward, particularly over the last week, although I will say that he pushed the envelope and made sure we were tending to business even before that, because I think Senator SCHUMER also wants to see this bill come to fruition.

I also need to thank the administration, the folks who represent President Biden in his negotiations. And I am going to name names: Louisa Terrell, Brian Deese, Steve Ricchetti. These folks were incredible resources, and they were incredibly helpful, and this bill would not have happened without their input.

I also want to thank all the staff members, both in the personal offices and the committees, from both sides of the aisle, who gave up their weekends and worked late into the night over and over and over again. I have said this before. I will say it again. The staff does the work; the Senators take the credit for it. The fact is that our staffs really rolled up their sleeves and really performed in a way that every American would be proud.

Look, over the next 3 or 4 days, we have the opportunity to prove that the U.S. Senate can do big things and still function. The process we have been through hasn't been pretty. I don't think it is supposed to be pretty. But it has been worth the while.

I would say the world is watching, both our allies and our adversaries. Our allies want us to succeed. Our adversaries want us to fail. I would say to everybody in this body, on both sides of the aisle—and we did get a 67-vote majority to move forward with this bill: Let's show them that America can function again. Let's get this bill passed. Let's get it over to the House. Let's get it to the President's desk for his signature.

With that, I yield, Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Republican whip.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, it is good to see the Senate taking up a genuinely bipartisan bill this week. A group of Members from both parties have spent weeks developing this legislation, and we saw the result of their work in the bipartisan support for proceeding to this bill.

Now, we need to let that bipartisan process continue. We need to give Members who weren't a part of the bipartisan group a chance to weigh in, and that means making sure that we have a robust amendment process.

I know the majority leader is eager to get through this legislation and on to the Democrats' next piece of what is partisan legislation, and that is a \$3½ trillion tax-and-spending spree, but

that is not a good reason for rushing this infrastructure bill through the Senate.

This is an enormous bill. It is more than 2,700 pages long, and the legislative text was just released last night. To start with, Members need time to digest this legislation, and then Members need the opportunity to offer amendments.

The bill before us today is a genuinely bipartisan bill, and I am very grateful for the tireless efforts of the Members who put in so many long days and nights—and weekends, I might add—to get us to this point.

Like a lot of our colleagues, I spent the weekend here in Washington as the bipartisan group worked through many final drafting issues, and I appreciate the fact that the members of the group took the time to get the bill as right as possible before introducing it.

But this legislation was still put together by only a handful of Senators. And unlike traditional highway bills, there are major pieces of this legislation that haven't been through the rigor of a committee process.

So all Members deserve the chance to weigh in. A number of Senators have raised legitimate concerns about this legislation, such as whether the proposed pay-fors are sufficient to keep this legislation from driving up our debt, and they deserve to have the chance to air those concerns and offer possible solutions.

Infrastructure legislation is some of the most essential legislation that we consider. Commerce in this country depends on the strength of our infrastructure, from up-to-date electric grids to well-maintained airports and train tracks, ports and waterways, and roads and bridges.

We need to get this legislation right, and that means giving Members ample time to examine the details of the bill, and it means giving Members the chance to address any problems in the bill through a meaningful amendment process. We shouldn't sacrifice adequate time on this bill merely because the Democratic leader would like to spend next week jamming a 100-percent partisan piece of legislation through the U.S. Senate.

Let's honor the bipartisan process that has gotten us this far by finishing this infrastructure bill with a robust, bipartisan amendment process.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Hawaii.

TRIBUTE TO CARISSA MOORE

Mr. SCHATZ. Mr. President, last week, the world saw something that it had never seen before: surfing as an Olympic sport. The story of how this happened begins with a native Hawaiian named Duke Kahanamoku.

Duke was a natural athlete. He learned to swim at Waikiki Beach, and he went on to win five Olympic swimming medals, including three golds. He was an innovator who pioneered something called the "Kahanamoku kick,"

or the flutter kick, now used by most freestyle swimmers.

He was a visionary who, after winning gold at the 1912 Stockholm Olympics, pressed the International Olympic Committee to make surfing an Olympic sport. He traveled the world to promote surfing, bringing it to the continental United States and Australia and elsewhere, and became known as the father of modern surfing.

But, more than anything else, Duke Kahanamoku was an ambassador of aloha and the spirit of Hawaii. A reporter once asked him if it was a bigger thrill to win gold medals or "ride some of those giant waves," and he answered that surfing was a bigger thrill.

One century later, Duke's vision of Olympic surfing became reality, and there is nothing more fitting than Hawaii's own Carissa Moore winning the first Olympic Gold Medal.

If you want to see what the embodiment of aloha looks like, look no further than Carissa Moore. Like Duke, she shares his native Hawaiian roots and started surfing at Waikiki Beach as a young child. By the time she reached high school, she was already world-class.

She attended my alma mater, Punahou, a school that has graduated more than 30 Olympians and President Obama. Carissa also became the youngest person ever to win a world surfing title, at age 18, and went on to win three more.

Today, she stands alone as the world's top-ranked surfer, but it is not just talent that sets her apart. There is a saying that the best surfer is the one having the most fun, and that is unquestionably the case with Carissa. She is actually the best surfer, and she is also having the most fun.

She has this incredible combination of speed and power in the water and a remarkable humility that she carries with her everywhere that she goes. She is an intense competitor who wants to win every event that she enters but also wants to see her opponents and, more importantly, the sport of surfing itself succeed.

She has a passion to be admired and a joy that is infectious. She is, in short, the rare athlete who must be seen to be believed. And I know because I have seen it in Hawaii, and now the whole world knows too.

After she won the gold medal last week, Carissa spoke of Duke Kahanamoku. "It was beautiful to see his dream come true a century later," she said. She might as well have been speaking for all of Hawaii.

So, today, we honor Duke and the incredible legacy that he left. We honor Carissa Moore for her athleticism and her commitment to inspire the next generation of surfers, especially young girls, and we celebrate the sport of surfing finally getting the recognition that it deserves.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HICKENLOOPER). Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Alaska.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I am on the floor this afternoon as we are waiting to learn when we might be able to proceed to a series of amendments as they relate to the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act.

This is a significant measure, one that I have been very proud to be involved with for a period of time, working with colleagues on both sides of the aisle in our working groups—G-10, G-22—working with the committee chairman and ranking member, working with other Members to get where we are today, which is a long-awaited—really, a long-away—investment in our Nation's infrastructure.

I know that Members are looking through the significant legislation that is in front of us. You don't need to take my word for it. You can look at the number of inches of the document in front of me. It is significant.

Mr. President, I would suggest to you the need in this country is significant when it comes to investments in our Nation's infrastructure—our core infrastructure—what we define to be our roads, our rails, our bridges, our ports, our water and sewer, our broadband. I think we recognize that we talk a lot in this Chamber and perhaps on the other side, as well, and Presidents have come and gone and all talked about the need for more investment in our infrastructure. But truth be told, we really haven't done a real wholesale effort toward that goal until this year. We saw significant work come out of committees this year.

I want to commend the chairman of the Environment and Public Works Committee, Senator CARPER, my friend from Delaware. His committee worked hard, not only on the surface transportation measure but also the water infrastructure measure that had passed through.

We have seen other good work in other areas of infrastructure.

I am on the Energy and Natural Resources Committee. That committee was able to move out a significant—what we call the power infrastructure—piece that became one of the anchor tenets, if you will, within this measure.

There has been good, collaborative work through the committees. Then that has been built on by Members, again, across the aisle over these past months to get us to where we are today.

I ask Members, as they are going through the bill itself, the language that we had hoped we would get a little bit earlier for colleagues to go through—but in fairness, we really needed to take the time to make sure

that we had gotten it right. It really does matter. So it did cause some delay that we wish we could have avoided, but we are where we are.

It is Monday afternoon, and what I am hearing from colleagues is that they want an opportunity to engage in this process. Many in this body have not been part of the working groups. Perhaps, they weren't part of the committees that had advanced some of these pieces of legislation that we have incorporated. They want to be participants, and rightly so. This is the time to do just that.

I think it is everyone's intention that we have a robust amendment process moving forward. I am actually looking forward to this. I have had the opportunity on this floor several times now to be able to manage energy bills, natural resources bills, bills that have been significant, bills on which we have actually been able to have a pretty decent amendment process.

Sometimes, in fairness—sometimes—that amendment process caused things to derail for a period of time. We don't want to do that in this instance, not at all. But it is not very often that we really do have a true and a meaningful amendment process. We are going to have an opportunity for that with the budget resolution coming forward. But I think, for the most part, most of us know that there is a lot of messaging that goes on. This is not about messaging. This is about delivering results for the American people. This is about creating jobs as we build out legacy infrastructure that is needed around the country.

Highways. We all know—we all know—that our highways are in need of help and support. The provisions that we have included in this measure for roads and bridges will be significant as we attend to the many damaged bridges that we see around the country, that really do present a threat to public safety. Let's get on them. We know our highways, in so many areas, are in serious disrepair, and in certain areas, we need to be doing more to help build out that highway infrastructure to ease the congestion to allow for greater efficiency, to allow us, as Americans, to do more of the things that we want to do, whether it is to spend more time with your family, be more productive at your work, but let's have an efficient system.

We have a little over 14,000 miles of public roads in Alaska. I can tell you that, as we look to my State's roads and the condition and the shape that they are in, I know that we need investments in this space, but I also know that it is not just about roads and bridges. We also allow for things like replacements of culverts for the community—actually, the community that I was born in—in Ketchikan. I just met with the community leaders, and they shared with me that some of these culvert replacement projects are as key and critical to them as anything else that they have going on. And so

recognizing that what we are doing is allowing for greater safety, greater access through our support for highways, for bridges, for things like culverts, for pedestrian safety initiatives, I think we all want to do more in that area.

Alaskans probably fly more than we drive. Our reality is some 80 percent of our communities are not connected by road, and the geography, the expanse that we deal with, is that we are just not going to be connected that way. But we don't need to be connected that way when we can be connected by the air and when we can be connected over the water. And so this legislation is, again, very important to those who fly.

And when I talk about flying, you know, sometimes these are small bush carriers, moving mail and groceries and people to medical appointments. But the fact that we have \$15 billion in formula funding for the FAA Airport Improvement Program, this is going to be key. This helps with everything from runway lighting to navigation, taxiway initiatives. These are ways that the 400 public airports in Alaska are going to be able to move out on a more efficient basis, if you will, some of the necessary safety upgrades that they have in front of them. And, again, us, it is not just about the land-based airports; we also have the sea-based areas that we worry about. We have some 114 sea-based airports that we refer to.

So recognizing that not every airport is like a Dulles or a DCA here, what we are able to do for our small hub airports, our nonhub airports, our nonprimary airports—communities of all sizes, because, again, whether you are in Bethel or Utqiagvik or wherever you may be throughout the State, all sizes are not the same here. So making sure that we are able to accommodate that is going to be important.

I have mentioned that we are also connected on land, air, but also by sea, and for those of us who are in coastal States—the Senator from Delaware has a coastline, has ferries—people move around by ferries. We rely on our Alaska Marine Highway System. There are some 30, 35 different communities where that really is their connector. That is how the kids move the high school basketball team. That is how the church groups move. That is how you pick up the groceries at Costco in Juneau, and you put them on the ferry to go over to Angoon. It is how people shop. It is how they—it is their road. It is the Alaska Marine Highway System, and so recognizing the support that we can provide for our ferry systems, whether it is in Alaska or Delaware or places in between, is, again, an important opportunity for us.

We recognize that as we provide support for those technologies that will allow us to move people more efficiently and more cleanly, there is a lot of emphasis from this administration, particularly, with focus on EVs. Well, in this measure, we not only have provisions as they relate to clean

schoolbuses but also to alternative fuel ferries. Recognizing that we have some opportunities, whether it is an EV ferry that might run from Haines to Skagway or an alternative fuel, we want to be thinking forward into the future.

One of the pieces of this measure—this very significant infrastructure bill—that a lot of work has gone into is the water and wastewater title. This is significant. This is significant. We saw, not too many years ago, the situation in Flint, MI, with lead pipes. We have been working to address many of those issues for a period of time, and rightly so. We provide significant funding—more than \$180 million over 5 years—for the water and wastewater projects in Alaska through the Clean Water State Revolving Fund and the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund programs. These are significant for us.

In so many parts of the State, we are either faced with unserved communities, when it comes to water and wastewater, or vastly underserved. And when I say unserved, we kind of know what it means in the broadband sense, but let me explain to you what it means in the water and sewer place. It means that you don't have running water in your home; you don't have a toilet that flushes. You have a community well where people go, and they fill up their cherry jugs and haul it back. It means that for sanitation, for using the bathroom, the bathroom is effectively a Home Depot bucket. If you are fancy, you have a toilet seat on it. But it is the responsibility of somebody in the family to haul that bucket out and dump it.

I have shared pictures on the floor here of what that really means in a community to have no water—no water, no sewer system. Thirty-two out of a hundred ninety rural Alaska villages are currently in this situation.

I received a voice mail, over the weekend, from one of Alaska's mayors from a smaller community—on the road system, though. And she shared with me—and I owe her a call back—but she shared with me—she said: You know, there are so many people in my community who don't have running water. And, again, this is a community that is on the road system between Anchorage and Fairbanks. And so how we can help address what most would say is pretty basic infrastructure, is pretty basic healthcare needs when it comes to water and sanitation, there is significant funding in this measure for Indian Health Service's sanitation facilities.

I am the ranking member on the Indian Affairs Committee. I have been on this committee since I came to the Senate 19 years ago. I have seen, over the years, the efforts that we have made to try to address the water and sanitation needs in Indian Country in Alaska with our Native villages. Our reality that we face is we are still in an extreme deficit when it comes to our Tribal communities. The reality is that

we have left them behind when it comes to something like modern-day water and the wastewater systems. And so the unprecedented investment in sanitation infrastructure is one that, I think, is significant and incredibly important because we are seeking to clear all the known project needs.

Now, people will say that is aggressive, but let me tell you, when you go to some of these communities and you hear the concerns from the people in the village about how they are supposed to keep their families from contracting this virus, when this first simple step is to wash your hands, and they say: Water is pretty precious around here because we don't have a sink to wash our hands in. And so the effort here to catch up—and I don't even like to use those words in that sense. We have to do right by our Native people, and the effort here, I think, is key and critically important.

Another area that I am pleased that working with the committee of jurisdiction, led by Senator CARPER, that there has been a focus on—and this is something that Ranking Member CAPITO has been keenly focused on, as well—and this is the PFOS contamination through our clean water and our drinking water programs.

I also recognize that there is a focus on small and disadvantaged communities. I have one small community down in southeast Alaska, Gustavus. It is the community that is right next to the Glacier Bay National Monument area, and the PFOS in their little community, near the airport area, is something that is a major and significant concern for that tiny, small, little community. So making sure that, again, these programs—the funding that we are helping to advance—is good, whether you are an urban area with 100-year-old pipes that need replacement or you are a community that has lacked the original infrastructure in the first place, how we are able to ensure that the needs of our small communities are met as well is significant, and I think it is an important part of this legislation.

I mentioned broadband as being that other connector. We connect by way of transportation systems. We get that. But, nowadays, if you are not connected—if you are not connected by the broadband availability, the ability to communicate elsewhere—your economies are limited; you are limited. I mentioned the fact that so many of the communities in my State are not connected by a road and probably will not be in my lifetime. And they are not seeking that as an answer, but they do want to be connected to the rest of the world. They want to know that for the crafts that they are able to make at home, they have the ability to, perhaps, sell them to a broader audience. Maybe it is on your own little website, selling to folks in the lower 48 or globally. But you can't do that. You can't do that if you don't have the connection.

And so the recognition that the grants for the deployment—the broadband deployment—with minimum allocation to each State are important, but also recognizing a focus on these high-cost areas for deployment. I am just saying, if you are looking for a high-cost area for deployment, look no further than Alaska. It is not something that we are proud of; it is a reality. But part of the tragedy that we see is that, in many communities, broadband has arrived. The internet is there, but people can't afford to use it.

We have heard in the height of the pandemic last year a reality that families could not—could not connect because the cost to do so was just prohibitive, which meant that children weren't gaining that full access to the information. It meant that if you were trying to work from home, that you couldn't do that. And so it is a reality that it is not just about access, but access has to mean some level of affordability.

So the focus in this broadband piece, I think, is critically important as we look to the provisions in the Middle Mile Infrastructure grants; as we look to the support, again, for Tribal broadband, recognizing, again, that this is an area that has been chronically underfunded in the past.

There is so much that—when you think about how solid infrastructure allows you to have an economy. In Anchorage, we host what we call Alaska's port. And it is a significant port. Obviously the largest one in the State. But it is through the Port of Alaska that over 85 percent of the goods, the commodities come into the State, and then they are distributed either by truck or by rail, air, but they are moved out from there. And we know what an economic driver that port is to not only Anchorage, but to the State as well.

But it is not just big ports; it is also the smaller ports. We have got more coastline than any State in the country.

And, again, if you don't have the roads, how are you getting in?

You are maybe flying in by small airplane, but more likely your materials are barged up during the summer months. That is how you get the lumber. That is how you get the snow machine or the four-wheeler to go out and do your hunting.

Our reality is that our ports have to work in every size community, and so knowing that there will be additional support for remote and subsistence harbor construction is going to be so key—so key—to these small, small, little communities for whom, if they didn't have this, they have got nothing.

You can't move fish out, you can't move fish in; you can't move goods in, you can't move goods out. Everything, then, is flown in; and think about what that means if everything is flown in. It is crazy, wicked expensive. And you are talking about a—you are talking about a sheet of sheetrock, the fact is that if

you are—if you are flying in your materials, it is almost impossible to be able to afford any of it.

There is so much, again, when I think about ways that we help to build our communities, help build our economies, help create jobs through infrastructure.

And I spent a lot of time focused on energy initiatives, and I am pleased with the work that came out of the Energy Committee that is focused in these various areas that drive the level of innovation that we will need as we are working to be more efficient, to have cleaner energy sources, and to really be more competitive.

We effectively took the Energy Act that we passed last—at the end of last Congress and we helped to build out many of the provisions that were contained in that act, whether it is the advanced reactor demonstration project; more on hydropower and marine energy research; funding for geothermal, wind, solar energy; the energy storage demonstration projects—so much, again, that is focused on what do we need to do to really be not only forward-leaning and innovative, but efficient to allow for a more competitive role globally.

When you think about our Nation's grid infrastructure and resiliency, you don't need to close your eyes and imagine what can happen when your grid fails.

Unfortunately, as we are seeing—as we are seeing, whether they are wildfires, whether we are seeing brownouts with the extreme heat, our reality is that our grid infrastructure needs support. We need to have that resiliency that we all talk about. And, again, I am going to stand up for the small grids, the smaller utilities who face the same pressures that you might have in an integrated grid back here, in fact, even maybe more so.

If you are a small, stand-alone community, you are your own grid. You need to have a level of resilience and the ability to make sure that people are not literally freezing in the dark.

And so the effort that we have included with regards to our set-aside for small utilities, these are—these are significant initiatives.

I have mentioned resilience a couple different times. I think sometimes people think that that is a word that is overused, but I will tell you, we can't be doing enough when it comes to resilience.

We have included in this measure a provision that we entitled “Tribal Climate Resilience.” This is funding that is included to really help with those threatened communities. Many we see in my State, but certainly I hear from colleagues in other States who are seeing the same concerns as communities are more threatened due to—whether it is erosion, as we are seeing in Alaska, or flooding, but support to assist with climate resilience, adaptation projects, as well as community relocation.

I will wrap up by just a little bit more commentary on the resilience

piece. We are seeing in the West incredible drought right now. We are seeing the extent of these forest fires from Oregon going east. But I think it is important for colleagues to know that, again, when we are talking about infrastructure and resilience, we also are acknowledging natural resource-related infrastructure and what more we might be doing with wildfire management, ecosystem restoration.

And so to make sure that there is support for things like mechanical thinning, fuel breaks, other activities to reduce the risk of wildfire, whether it is on our Forest Service lands or any of our public lands, but also the concerns, then, when the fire knows no boundary as to whose lands they are.

Certainly in Alaska we saw the benefit of fuel breaks as they were implemented on the Kenai. We had a pretty significant fire several years back, the Funny River Fire, and we saw full well what that fuel break really did to help protect property and life.

The bill also includes precommercial thinning, which, again, is important in a host of different areas, not the least of which in my State on the Tongass.

But I think we do a good job to make sure that when we are talking about infrastructure, we are recognizing the core infrastructure of—whether it is legacy projects, like roads, rails, bridges, but also recognizing that infrastructure has impact to our lands and how we ensure that there is greater resilience, again, greater protections, and ensuring that it is addressed perhaps more broadly.

So there is much good in this bill. There is not everything that I would have wanted, most certainly. There are a lot of things in it that, in fairness, I wish weren't in it. There are some pieces that I look at and I say "way over the top," but I have to acknowledge I come from a State where infrastructure is just a little bit different.

We don't have a big public transit system, so I look at the transit dollars, and my immediate jump is: Way too much. Don't need this.

But I recognize that in a collaborative process, in a negotiated process, you have got to hear the views back and forth of all of your colleagues, and you take some things and you leave some things behind in a give-and-take process.

And so just as my colleagues have listened to me convey the urgency of need for more support for the Tribal programs when it comes to infrastructure, whether it is on water and sanitation or broadband, they heard the urgency there; whether it was recognizing that not all infrastructure projects are big in terms of their size, but they are big for that small community; to know that the fishing community of Craig is going to be able to build out that little harbor there.

And so I have asked my colleagues to listen to the concerns of a very rural State like Alaska, a State where our infrastructure is very unique, and they

have had an open mind and a view towards not only recognizing how unique Alaska is, but recognizing the unique needs of rural America.

So we have a compromise product in front of us, and it is a significant product, and we are now at a place where we want colleagues to join us in this product, weigh in with your good ideas. Let's move some good amendments. But I would suggest that the sooner we start moving with these amendments, the better it will be for us and this process here, but also for the American public.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, while the Senator from Alaska is still here, I have been sitting here listening to a tour de force. God, what a wonderful, wonderful speech and clearly from the heart.

The Presiding Officer and I are recovering Governors, and the Senator's father was a recovering Governor at one time; and, actually, one of the smartest things he ever did, he appointed his daughter to serve—when there was a vacancy in the Senate, he appointed Lisa to serve at that vacancy.

And 2 years later, Tony Mills, who was Governor of Alaska, ran against her. Tony is one of my closest friends. We were Governors together for 6 years, and I said: Oh, my God, this is a hard choice.

And it was a hard choice for the folks from Alaska to make as well.

And Lisa was elected to the Senate and served with distinction. And when she ran for reelection as a Republican, I think, was defeated in a primary, and then turned around and ran a write-in campaign that I will never forget. I am sure she won't either.

And in a write-in campaign, in one of the cleverest political maneuvers I have ever seen—MURKOWSKI is not an easy name to write in. Not everybody in Alaska, even though a famous name, knew how to write "Murkowski."

My recollection is the Murkowski campaign folks were smart enough to distribute fliers and messages throughout the State that had a picture of—a drawing—a cartoon of a cow on skis, with a bubble coming out of the cow's mouth with the word "Mur"—"Mur cow ski." Then she won, rather handily, her write-in race and still is with us today.

We talked a lot here today about bridges. When I was in college, I was actually a Navy midshipman, and I was driving down to Florida to visit my parents and close friend, and we drove across a bridge across the Ohio River. I want to say—actually, I think the date was 1967. December 15, 1967, we were on our way to my parents in Florida, and the next day the bridge that we had gone across collapsed into the Ohio River between Point Pleasant, WV, and Conagua, OH, and 46 people were killed. Forty-six people were killed. I will never forget that. Whenever we talk

about the need to address our poor condition bridges, I remember that. And for the folks who had lost loved ones that day, they remember that too.

We have gone through some troubled waters here in the Capitol and the Senate and in the House and in our country in recent months, weeks, years, and there is still trouble. And it is great to have a bridge over troubled waters, like you, to carry us through. And I just want to thank you for your great work in so many different ways but also with respect to the gang of 22 and keeping people on track. You make your family proud, and I think all of us proud, so thank you. Thank you.

I have been joined by a fellow from Louisiana, and I understand we are also going to be joined shortly by the fellow from Ohio, Senator PORTMAN, who is going to come to the floor any minute, I think, to give his remarks. And I don't know if the gentleman from Louisiana is here to speak shortly or not, but we look forward to whatever he has to say.

We are now joined by the Senator from Ohio, successor to George Voinovich, who was both a Senator and a Governor. I had a great conversation with him in Ohio last week, and I am very grateful to him for his extraordinary leadership through these troubled waters, and there will be another one of those bridges over troubled waters.

I am happy to yield the floor to Senator PORTMAN.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. HIRONO). The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. PORTMAN. Chairman CARPER, thank you. Thank you for managing this important legislation and all the work you have put into it.

You know, I asked my team today: Can you give me a sense of how much of this underlying legislation we are talking about on the floor this week that was already written? In other words, what did Senator CAPITO, Senator CARPER, and others on the EPW Committee, as an example, already write with regard to this surface transportation bill that we are simply picking up in this legislation and moving forward to be sure it gets reauthorized, certainly before September 30, and we hope far before that. And about half of the pages of the bill is language that was written through the committee process here. Now, some may be happy to hear that, and some may be unhappy to hear that, but that is the truth. And, frankly, it made our job easier because a lot of the hard work was done.

In the case of the legislation that Senators CARPER and CAPITO shepherded through their committee with regard to our highways and bridges, it was a 20-to-nothing vote, as I recall, out of committee, unanimous. So we thought it was appropriate for us not to tell them how to do their job but to help them by picking up that legislation, and as they have improved that legislation, their underlying authorization legislation, and ensure that it is

included in the package. And I appreciate Senator CARPER and Senator CAPITO working with us on that even over the past few weeks. So, yes, we have added more on top of it because we believe our Nation needs a shot in the arm. We have enormous infrastructure needs. But without Senator CAPITO and Senator CARPER's involvement, 20 to nothing out of committee, we wouldn't be where we are today, and that is the foundation upon which this was built. So, again, I know that is not understood by everybody, but that is a fact.

And our Nation's infrastructure does need the help. And this legislation, the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act before us right now, is an unprecedented investment. It is historic, but it is that because a historic investment is needed. It is important to note that we did so without raising taxes on the American people or causing further inflation in an already overheated economy. I heard some of my colleagues on my side say: Gosh, I want to support you, but I am worried about the spending and its impact on inflation. Well, this is what the economists would call supply-side spending. This is long-term spending for capital assets that may last 40, 50, 70 years. Think of a bridge or think of another infrastructure project like a big water infrastructure project. So it is a different kind of spending. It is not going to be spent over the next year. In fact, very little, if any, will be spent in the next year, but it will be spent over time—over 5, 10 years for these kinds of projects. That is the kind of money that goes into building infrastructure and building jobs. Therefore, again, on the supply side rather than the demand side of the economy, as economists would say, it is not stimulating the economy in that way; it is growing the economy long term.

Most economists who have looked at this, including economists like Doug Holtz-Eakin, who used to be here at CBO, or an economist like Michael Strain at the American Enterprise Institute or the Penn work-study at the University of Pennsylvania. They all say the same thing, which is that this is actually counterinflationary kind of spending. That is important.

I will say that this is needed because we are falling behind as a country, and every State has its own needs here. I will tell you what my needs are in the State of Ohio, which is that we make a lot of stuff. So our factory workers who make tanks and cars and washing machines, we want to be sure that our infrastructure works to be able to get that to market. Sometimes that market is the United States, and sometimes it is overseas. Therefore, our ports are important but so is our rail and so are our highways. Our farmers—we have got a lot of farmers in Ohio who plant crops. We want to make sure that those crops can get to the elevators so that the grain can get out.

We have a lot of people in Ohio who live in cities and commute. And so the

mom who is looking at her commute every day and saying, “Why do I get stuck in traffic at rush hour both ways and have to spend all this time in the car when I could be spending it with my kids,” wouldn't it be great to improve those highways and those bridges to be able to reduce the amount of time that someone is stuck in a car? So this is about helping our country at a time when we need it.

There is probably no better example of that than broadband because think about the child in Appalachian Ohio who has no Wi-Fi service—like none. I am not talking about slow Wi-Fi; I am talking about no Wi-Fi. I look at my colleague from West Virginia and think of all the counties in West Virginia that are in the same shape that they are in Eastern Ohio. We are expanding broadband in an unprecedented way. The deployment of broadband into the rural community but also access in the more suburban and urban communities, that is really important because that child now can be able to do the schoolwork at home. And during the pandemic, of course, this has been a huge issue, but it is an issue every day. Rather than having to drive with her mom to the local library, which some girl might have to do in Appalachia to find a Wi-Fi signal, she can actually get it at home because of this deployment we have provided here, which is unprecedented.

So all of this is in this. It is all part of it. It is important.

The American Society of Civil Engineers has given our Nation a report card every year. Our report card right now is a C-minus. We get a C-minus.

Now, I did get a couple C's in high school and college, so I don't think C's are always terrible, but I don't want our infrastructure to get a C, much less a C-minus.

They estimate that somewhere in America there is a water break every 2 minutes. Water infrastructure is part of this. They also estimate that 43 percent of our public roads are in poor or mediocre condition. This hasn't improved in years.

We are now listed 13th in the world for infrastructure in the most recent rankings by the World Economic Forum. They, every year, look at all these countries around the world and say, where do you rank? The United States is right up there. I think Singapore and the United States are some of the most competitive countries in the world, in terms of all the analysis they do, but not on infrastructure. On infrastructure, it drags us down because, frankly, we haven't invested as other countries have.

The number out there that people use is that China spends four times more than we do as a percent of their economy on infrastructure. I think it is actually higher than that from the numbers I have seen. But let's say it is four times more. China gets it. They know infrastructure is important for economic growth. I talked earlier about

how it makes the economy more efficient and therefore more productive and therefore you have more tax revenue generated. They get that. We have allowed our infrastructure to get to the point where we are not competitive as a country with so many others, not just developed countries either.

We have cut back funding over the years, and so it is probably no wonder this has happened. The Aspen Economic Strategy Group calculated that as of 2017, our total spending on infrastructure across the public and private sectors hit its lowest point since at least 1947. So relatively speaking, we have less expenditures on infrastructure, and this lack of investment has real impact. Historian Henry Petroski estimates that the delays caused by traffic congestion alone cost our economy more than \$120 billion every year.

So I talked about the mom who is commuting and not being able to spend more time with her kids because she is sitting in her car—\$120 billion a year is the economic impact. That is important, too. One 2017 study by the American Society of Civil Engineers estimated there was a total infrastructure gap of more than \$2 trillion that we need to address by 2025; otherwise, we could lose nearly \$4 trillion in GDP, economic growth, that we otherwise would have produced as a country.

Now, those are big numbers. Those are big numbers. These are the engineers who say we have a gap of \$2 trillion we need to address by 2025. Ours is \$550 billion over the next 5 years—historic levels. Some would say it may not be enough. I think it is. And you will hear a lot about this, this week, all the different places where the infrastructure investments are made. But others would say we need to do even more. You can see that there is a need for renewed infrastructure.

Let me give you a really specific example, and it is one reason I am interested in this project, honestly. For, gosh, 25 years now, we have been talking about fixing our bridge in Cincinnati, OH. It is called the Brent Spence Bridge. It is where I-75 and I-71 come together, so think about all the commercial traffic. Actually, 3 percent of the Nation's commerce goes over this one bridge every year. It is a huge economic issue for us in Greater Cincinnati. There is congestion there every day. It is a bottleneck. The bridge is busy. In fact, it is carrying twice the number of cars that it was built to carry already.

There are no shoulders anymore on it because they tried to expand the lanes as much as they can. We recently had two trucks crash there partly because there is no shoulder, and the safety problems are huge on that bridge. It took the bridge out for a couple months—a huge economic impact, huge economic impact. This bridge, again, for 25 years, people have said: We have got to replace this bridge. It is not safe. It is not big enough. It doesn't connect 71 and 75 in the way that it

should for our commercial activities. It is a bridge that has been deemed by the U.S. Department of Transportation as “functionally obsolete.” That sounds pretty dramatic—“functionally obsolete.” Unfortunately, again, these accidents continue to happen because it is not safe. You have got 160,000 vehicles on it rather than the 80,000 per day it was designed to accommodate. It needs to be fixed, but it is really expensive, and the local community and the State just simply can’t do it alone.

There are critical pieces of infrastructure like the Brent Spence Bridge in States all over our country, from roads to railroads, to ports, to broadband networks that all need upgrades to stay competitive in this global economy. It is no surprise, then, that infrastructure is an area where the American people really do want action. They get it on this one. They want us to come together as Republicans and Democrats and fix this problem.

There was a recent poll by CNBC saying 87 percent of Americans think it is important we invest in improving our crumbling roads and bridges. There was another poll that came out a couple months later, a very recent poll, saying—again, this is a CBS poll—87 percent of Americans support more Federal spending on repairing roads and bridges. Two polls, 2 months apart, same number, 87 percent. Eighty-seven percent of the American people don’t agree on anything, but they do agree on this, which is let’s fix our infrastructure. Let’s do what Presidents in modern times have all said we ought to do: President Bush, President Obama, President Trump, President Biden. President Trump had a proposal for \$1.5 trillion. Ours is \$550 billion. President Trump is a developer, a builder, and he understood the need for infrastructure investment, but, frankly, Congress didn’t work with him to get that done. There were also issues about how that was to be paid for. But I commend President Trump for raising that issue. He ought to be given some credit because we might not be talking about it. At the end, he continued to say we need to invest big time in infrastructure.

Then President Biden, in his campaign, said the same thing, and when he took office, he said the same thing: We need to do an infrastructure plan. His original plan wasn’t one that Republicans could support because it had huge tax increases in it and it had a lot of infrastructure that wasn’t core infrastructure. That is why we came together as a bipartisan group.

Senator CAPITO is here. She worked with the White House on this to try to come up with a way to move forward, and, again, that helped create the foundation for what we have done here.

But the point is, Republicans and Democrats alike over the years have said the same thing, which is, it is time; let’s fix this infrastructure.

Finally, we are giving infrastructure the help it needs and deserves and giv-

ing the American people, more importantly, the infrastructure that they want. And it is a good investment. One 2014 University of Maryland study found that each dollar spent on infrastructure can generate a return of as much as \$3 to the U.S. economy—\$1 in, \$3 out. It is smart spending if done correctly. That explains again why President Trump put forward the \$1.5 trillion package, why President Biden put together a package, and why Democrats and Republicans alike up here on Capitol Hill talked about infrastructure for years.

American workers need infrastructure. They don’t need new taxes. That is why, in this proposal, again, we say: Let’s take the taxes out. Let’s pull the core infrastructure out so it is more focused on what is really needed, and let’s do it on a bipartisan basis. That is what we do in this proposal.

The pro-growth policies put in place by Congress through the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017 was very good for our economy in every respect. Wages went up, lowest poverty rate since we started keeping track of it back in the 1950s. It had a lot of very good things. Unemployment was at historic lows for many groups, including Blacks and Hispanics. It was an overall 15-year low in unemployment.

We have to be sure that we are not raising taxes now because we went into this pandemic with a strong economy, and we have to come out of it with a strong economy. But infrastructure is something that we should do without raising taxes.

There was a lot of discussion, after President Biden talked about infrastructure, as to whether it could be partisan or bipartisan. There were some people saying: Let’s put it in what is called reconciliation, where you don’t need a single Republican vote. I applaud President Biden and Republicans and Democrats in this Chamber for saying: You know what, this is one where we ought to be able to get together. If you can’t get together on a bipartisan basis on infrastructure, where can you?

That is why we were able to figure out a way—again, without raising taxes and focusing on core infrastructure—to ensure that the critical infrastructure we rely on every day—our roads, our bridges, our railways, our electrical grids, our water supplies, our broadband and more—will get fixed. Again, 87 percent of the American people are looking for us to do that. It is no wonder. Go home and talk to the people you represent in your State, and they will tell you this is one where we can come together. We need to deal with the infrastructure challenges we face and the digital divide that is out there.

What this does not include is a grab bag of social spending priorities that the Democrats want to include in the other bill they are talking about, which is the \$3.5 trillion spending proposal they unveiled earlier this month,

and that is an important point my colleagues should not miss.

The President has said that the \$3.5 trillion package, the so-called reconciliation package, will not include more core infrastructure funding. In other words, the President has said: I propose \$2.65 trillion. The bipartisan group pulled out core infrastructure and said it is going to be \$550 billion. I am now not going to put the additional amount I wanted into reconciliation.

Simply put, Republicans and Democrats alike, coming together to focus on the core part of this, without taxes, have ensured that the “lot more” is not going to be spent both on core infrastructure and on so-called social infrastructure with huge tax increases in another package. So this is the best thing for the American economy by far, to have a bipartisan proposal.

The President has said that we are not going to double-dip. In other words, infrastructure won’t be in the next package. He said that privately, he said that publicly, and I believe he will keep his word on that. Certainly, those of us who were involved in this will ensure that that is not part of the agreement that is violated.

So we are seeing these studies come out that show that this is the right approach for the economy. We talked about the University of Pennsylvania Wharton School of business proposal that says our proposal will actually increase the economy, raise wages for workers, and actually lower our national debt over the longer term. Again, because of this feedback loop we talked about earlier, it makes the economy more efficient, more productive, grows the economy, and more revenue will be coming into the economy, and, again, we do so without raising taxes.

A Democratic economist, Larry Summers, and many on the Republican side of the aisle have been warning for months about inflation. Again, as I said earlier, this is counterinflationary.

The bottom line is that the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act will provide a historic investment in hard infrastructure, with input from a bipartisan group of Senators, while avoiding the tax hikes and the reckless spending proposed by the Biden administration.

Importantly, for the sake of future bipartisan hearings here in Congress, this is an infrastructure plan that allows us to avoid the repeat of the COVID-19 \$1.9 trillion spending bill that passed under the partisan process called reconciliation. It demonstrates to the American people that, in fact, we can figure out how to work together to get big things done. President Biden said he wanted to work in a bipartisan way. Well, this is a great example of it. It is a genuine effort on behalf of Republicans and Democrats to find common ground and move our country forward.

I am committed to working with my colleagues here in the Senate to see

this legislation through to the end. We have come a long way, and I believe we are close to achieving a historic victory for the American people. I encourage all of my colleagues to join us in supporting this Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act so that we can truly make an important bipartisan investment in the next generations of Americans.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

CHINA

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Madam President, I am really on the record opposing President Biden's decision to abruptly withdraw troops from Afghanistan, and I oppose it for the same reasons many of the world's most respected military officials oppose it.

We knew our allies would suffer. The Taliban have burned their way through Afghanistan and staked a claim on much of the territory that we have now abandoned. We created a void, and the Taliban walked right on in.

Last week, we watched as another of our adversaries planted their own flag in Afghanistan. On Wednesday, the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs tweeted this picture from a meeting between Chinese Communist Party officials and the Taliban. That is correct, Wednesday of last week. They even went so far as to say they are hopeful that the Taliban will embrace a peaceful and more inclusive approach to government.

It was a nice piece of performance art from a government recently accused of genocide. But this is what the CCP does best—fill the void, throw up a diplomatic facade, and seize as much power as they possibly can seize as quickly as they can do it.

Back home in Tennessee, we have felt the ripple effects of Beijing's creeping dominance. You know, when most people think of a foreign threat, they think of an army or a spy ring, but what we need to understand is that these threats are much more subtle. If you don't know what you are looking for, you will end up missing it.

Back in the midnineties, when I was the executive director for the Tennessee Film, Entertainment and Music Commission, we were already fighting a losing battle against Chinese intellectual property theft. Now, this might not seem like a matter of national security, but for the songwriters and producers and creators who fell victim to it, it was a matter of economic security. This theft made them vulnerable. It made multiple industries vulnerable in our State, including the auto industry, auto parts, aviation, water sports. They all started to feel the effects of a dishonest Chinese Communist Party, and therefore, it made our country's economy vulnerable. The same goes for those playing whack-a-mole with the pirates and counterfeiters selling stolen or outright fake merchandise.

It is a serious vulnerability. Sometimes those vulnerabilities are more

obvious, however. For example, when the novel coronavirus sent us into lockdown, we were finally able to draw attention to how much control Beijing has over healthcare in America. They have a stranglehold on our supply chains for active pharmaceutical ingredients and medical supplies.

I introduced the SAM-C Act last year with Senator MENENDEZ. That legislation would protect those supply chains and bring production back to the United States. This threat didn't spontaneously evolve; it is the result of 100 seemingly small vulnerabilities that our adversaries in Beijing had found a way to exploit. How did it happen? Well, it has a lot to do with their slow takeover of international organizations—namely, the United Nations.

Since 1971, the Chinese Communist Party has exploited hopes that membership in the U.N. would force them to behave like a normal country, but the reality of the situation is that Chinese diplomats control 4 out of 15 specialized U.N. agencies and many other subsidiary offices. Even more importantly, the CCP is flooding the U.N. with lower level staff, which means they have strength in numbers that we do not have. They have seized far too much power for comfort.

Since 2007, Chinese diplomats have led the U.N. Department of Economic and Social Affairs, which means they have also controlled the direction of the U.N.'s development programs.

By 2015, they had gained enough influence to make development synonymous with Belt and Road Initiative projects, which, as we all know, are debt trap schemes for Beijing's leveraging against struggling nations. This is a debt trap scheme.

In 2014, China placed a diplomat at the top of the International Telecommunication Union. Since then, the ITU has more or less been Beijing's mouthpiece. They promote Chinese companies, Chinese telecom standards, and, of course, support Beijing's attempts to monopolize communications infrastructure in countries stuck in debt traps. It is all connected.

Since their admission to the U.N., the CCP has practically achieved immunity from accountability for human rights violations. The NGO China has used for years to whitewash their barbaric treatment of Tibetans is now a U.N.-accredited organization.

In 2018, when the United States withdrew from UNESCO, who was waiting in the wings to become the largest financial contributor to global education? You are right. It was China. They have used their stranglehold on the Department of Economic and Social Affairs to officially silence the Uighur Muslims of Xinjiang. They used their status as members of the Human Rights Council as cover for horrendous human rights violations in Tibet, Inner Mongolia, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and on the Mainland.

In 2019, we confirmed whistleblower testimony that revealed the Office of

the High Commissioner for Human Rights sent the names of activists critical of the Chinese Communist Party straight to Beijing.

And last year, we watched the World Health Organization praise Beijing for lying to the world about the severity of the disease that would eventually cause a deadly global pandemic.

We are in damage control mode. By the end of 2021, the U.N. will hold nine elections for heads of specialized agencies and five for major funds or programs. We control exactly none of these positions.

Our task is twofold. First, we must fill these voids. We don't have a choice. But we must also inject accountability by holding ourselves accountable for the integrity of our own relations with the U.N. and foreign countries.

Last week, I introduced the U.N. Transparency and Accountability Act, which will strengthen America's influence as a key U.N. member nation and expose the threat adversarial countries pose to international organizations.

My colleague, Congressman MICHAEL MCCAUL, from Texas has companion legislation ready to go in the House, and there is no sane reason why we shouldn't see these bills come up for a vote sooner rather than later.

We are going to find out exactly who these bad actors are. We are going to flood the U.N. with Americans to stop them. And we are going to account for every single penny we contribute to U.N. projects. And then we are going to make the reports on all that spending available to the American taxpayer who is footing the bill. No more hiding.

The bottom line is that we can't win this war without brute force. There is no weapon that can neatly cut the strings Beijing is pulling. Ceding freedom has consequences. The ripple effect created in Geneva and Brussels and New York and Washington can and will destroy the lives of people half a world away.

As effective as diplomacy can be, we are alone in this one. We are responsible for safeguarding our freedom.

As President Reagan once said, Freedom is always one generation away from extinction. "It has to be fought for and defended by each generation." There is no kicking the can down the road. Once it is gone, it is gone. There is no better voice for human rights than the United States. And if we do not speak up, we give every other nation on the planet an excuse to stay silent also.

No one will come to our rescue if our supply chains are compromised. No one will come to the rescue of Tennessee innovators and companies if their supply lines are compromised by the Communist Chinese. And no one else is going to make sure our children and grandchildren don't fall into one of Beijing's debt traps.

Perhaps we should keep that in mind this week as we take up all 2,700-plus pages of the infrastructure package. If ever there was a time for restraint,

this is it. The threat is staring us in the face, and I fear that my Democratic colleagues are missing the threat.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

LAW ENFORCEMENT

Mr. TUBERVILLE. Madam President, when I go back to my hometown of Alabama, I usually ask the people: What is the most important to you? Every day, what is the most important to you?

And, usually, there is a consensus of three things: a good job, schools for their kids, and safe neighborhoods for their families. That is always what they talk about.

You know, the fulfillment of these basic aspirations is a foundation of a quality of life, the foundation of the American dream.

In my relatively short time up here, I have noticed people in this building often lose sight of those three basic items. We waste time bickering over things that, at the end of the day, don't much matter in the grand scheme of things. We engage in bitter partisan commentary, all in the hopes of scoring political points.

Folks back home can't relate to this because they don't have the luxury to waste time on cheap talk.

We are witnessing a nationwide surge in crime as we speak. In the last year, homicides have risen upwards of 30 percent—this is unprecedented—and doubled the largest previous increase of 13 percent since 1968.

There is always more than one factor to consider when analyzing crime trends, but the effect of some Democrats' anti-police rhetoric has been perfectly clear. Just take a look at what is happening across our country as we speak.

For the last year, we have heard some Democrats at every level talk about wanting to defund the police, take money away from them; we have too many of them. In many cities they control, Democrats succeeded in reducing police budgets. They have been very successful. They have told police to stop doing their jobs, to stop enforcing certain laws.

I have heard Democrats say that they want to replace cops with social workers. You know, while I understand the well-intentioned desire to address the root cause of crime, instead of just focusing on the fallout, leaving our police underfunded and ill-equipped is not the solution.

If someone is attempting to break into my house, I am not calling a social worker to come perform an evaluation and to develop a treatment for the assailant. I am not doing that.

Too often, we have seen elected officials take the side of radicals burning property, looting small businesses, over the men and women who wear the badge and have sworn to serve and protect our communities. And now we are seeing the consequences all across the country.

As one report notes, in New York City, murders have increased 47 percent since 2020. Tickets and routine arrests dropped by 90 percent, but requests for police intervention went up by 50 percent. But the police won't go. They are not wanted.

Murders in Los Angeles this year are up 22 percent, and shootings are up 59 percent. But arrests in Los Angeles have dropped 37 percent since 2020, and are down even more this year.

In Chicago, murders were up 33 percent this year. Last weekend alone, 12 people were killed and 63 more were shot—the latest in a string of deadly weekends this summer. And carjackings in this city have tripled in the last year.

Why would you buy a car in Chicago? It is going to get stolen. It makes no sense.

In Minneapolis, where cries to defund the police are loudest, murders are up 69 percent. It turns out that when protesters, activists, mainstream media, and elected officials told cops they are not wanted, it is not just the officers who heard them; criminals also were listening. And the American people are paying the price.

Also, the defund rhetoric from the left is having a severely negative effect on police morale—an "all-time low," some officers say. According to an NBC survey of 200 police departments, officer retirements are up 45 percent and resignations are up 18 percent this year.

Why would anybody get up and put a uniform on in the morning with a badge on their chest and a gun on their side and go to work in this climate of crime?

We have to take our hat off to the men and women who are actually doing this and doing the best job they can.

Some police chiefs have had enough. The Chicago police superintendent said their court system continued to release the violent criminals in their jails, "making us all less safe."

The District of Columbia Police, right here in our hometown, said: "[We cannot continue to] coddle violent criminals."

Amen. But the ugly truth is there is a deliberate attempt to coddle these violent criminals, and it is bankrolled by the most radical fringe in the Democratic Party.

District attorneys are the local public officials who determine whether and how the government will prosecute criminals, from petty theft to violent crime—district attorneys. There has been a big movement to elect ultra-radical liberal district attorneys in big cities across the country. They have succeeded in Philadelphia, San Francisco, Boston, and just right across the river in Fairfax County, VA.

These rogue prosecutors—and they are rogue—are refusing to prosecute all sorts of crimes, like theft, disorderly conduct, and trespassing.

Well, what is their job?

It is to prosecute. But not these prosecutors. This isn't just opposing the

men and women who wear the badge. These radical leftists are opposing the very idea of enforcing the law. The prosecutor's job is to enforce the laws that are written, not rewrite the laws on the books. But these DAs are choosing to follow the law as they see fit. They know better than anybody else, ignoring what the people's representatives have passed.

In San Francisco, District Attorney Chesa Boudin said his office wouldn't prosecute theft under \$950. The result has been people robbing stores in broad daylight. We have all seen it on TV, going in the store, just grabbing all you can get and not running out the door, but walking out the door. If the cops are called, they don't show up. They know they are not going to do anything about these.

But probably the worst of all is in Boston. Rachael Rollins, elected DA in Boston in 2018, released a list of crimes that her office would, by default, move to dismiss when they came to court; we are not going to prosecute these: trespassing; shoplifting; theft under \$250; disorderly conduct; drug possession with intent to distribute; malicious destruction of property; breaking and entering, so long as the defender was trying to sleep or escape the cold; resisting arrest.

And that is not even the entire list. What do they need a DA for?

So if a violent felon could steal \$200 worth of goods, have large amounts of drugs, break into someone's home, resist arrest—and the DA's office would not even bother to prosecute these crimes. Makes a lot of sense to me.

If all of that sounds crazy to you, you are right. But these are the actual policies and the real-world effects.

And now Rollins, this same district attorney in Boston, who decided she is just going to take a vacation than being a district attorney and not try to convict anybody, this Ms. Rollins has been appointed by President Biden to be the U.S. Attorney for Massachusetts. He is giving the person who decriminalized resisting arrest and all these other laws a promotion. That is from our President. I wonder what Federal crimes she will decide aren't worth processing.

There is surely somebody in Boston who can do the job.

Yet President Biden is the only one saying Republicans are lying. He said that just a couple of weeks ago about Democrats wanting to defund the police. He said it is Republicans.

I will tell you what is also not helping to make our neighborhoods safer: the growing crisis at our southern border—absolute shame. And the Biden administration completely, completely lacks the urgency to fix it, and it is getting worse every day. I guess nobody cares.

We have already surpassed 1 million illegal immigrants since President Biden was inaugurated. And remember, this data is looking at the illegal immigrants and the drugs that Customs

and Border Protection catches. We don't know how many have slipped by or how many pounds of dope have slipped by. We just know the ones that we have caught.

President Biden is only making matters worse, folks. As our colleagues on the Homeland Security and Government Affairs Committee found, the Biden administration is spending \$2 billion to not build a wall. We are paying \$2 billion. Taxpayers in this country are paying \$2 billion to not build a wall. That is right. That is \$3 million, every day, of your taxpayer money wasted just to not build something that would help fix this crisis.

The bare minimum we should expect to happen at the border would be to make sure illegal immigrants we do apprehend have a court date so a judge can review their asylum claim. I mean, that is common sense. But, according to a recent report, 50,000 illegal immigrants have been released into the United States in the last few months without a court date. Yet only 13 percent of those have bothered to show back up—13 percent. We are going to trust them to come over here and just do it on their own. That is not going to happen.

At best, this hurts those who come into this country actually looking to plead their asylum case. Congress needs to pass my bill, S. 1007, that would require the DHS to provide a notice to appear before releasing the illegal immigrants into our country. It just makes common sense. But, as we have seen, too many folks in charge don't have any common sense when it comes to enforcing the law.

Everybody can see violent crime rising in big cities. They can see the Biden administration turning a blind eye to a continually growing catastrophe on the southern border. The American people are right to question President Biden and the Democrats' commitment to the rule of law, to question their commitment to keeping our citizens and neighborhoods safe.

I am painting a pretty bleak picture here, but my job is to call it like I see it. But there are things we in the Senate can do to make the situation better. We can do things here, right in this room right here, to make things better.

It starts with everybody fully supporting our law enforcement because, if we don't, one day we are going to regret it. We need to improve morale and recruit the best and brightest in our police forces to keep our communities safe.

We should also empower all law enforcement to address the negative effect at our border. This is the local and State police. The Empowering Law Enforcement Act that I introduced would give them the power to take over for ICE.

My bill would grant this and give them the authority to investigate and identify an illegal immigrant who has entered the U.S., which we at this moment don't have. If the Biden adminis-

tration won't enforce the law, let's give local and State law enforcement the opportunity to do it.

Folks, wanting safe communities is something every American wants and deserves. We elect public officials. We pay taxes and trust our governments to ensure safety for the greatest number of people possible.

It is pretty much impossible to have good jobs and good schools if you don't have safe neighborhoods, and it doesn't take a rocket scientist to see that. If the people don't feel safe, their government and we as government officials have failed to perform its most basic function. Failure of this is not an option.

So to reverse this rise in crime, let's support the very people who have put their lives on the line every day. I certainly do, and I encourage the President and Members of this body to support every member of our law enforcement.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

H.R. 3684

Mr. CARDIN. Madam President, I rise in support of the legislation that is before us, the bipartisan infrastructure package. I applaud all of those who have worked so hard so that we could have this legislation before us.

It is desperately needed when we look at the status of our infrastructure today, the aged systems that we have across our Nation. In Maryland, we have some infrastructure that dates back over a century and a half ago.

We need a generational investment to modernize our infrastructure, and the legislation before us does exactly that. It will make the United States more competitive and create a lot of good-paying jobs. It will deal with the growing backlog of infrastructure projects that we have in each one of our States.

I applaud the work that brought us to this point. I particularly am pleased that the legislation incorporates the work done by the Environment and Public Works Committee as it relates to transportation, infrastructure, and water infrastructure.

I particularly want to acknowledge the leadership of our committee, Senators CARPER and CAPITO. I was proud to be the chair of the subcommittee on infrastructure, working with Senator CRAMER and Senator DUCKWORTH, which contributed greatly, particularly to the water infrastructure.

I also want to applaud the leadership of President Biden. It was his leadership that has brought us to this moment, his vision for America's future, what we need, and he found a way for us to move forward on modernizing infrastructure.

So let me first, if I might, talk a little bit about the transportation parts of this bill that I am particularly pleased about. Clearly, we see a significant increase in our investments in roads, bridges, transit systems, rail,

airports, ports, and waterways. We can talk about some of the specifics, and I am going to do that.

But first I want to applaud the efforts that we have made to move forward in new directions. This bill, for the first time, in a major reauthorization of our surface transportation, acknowledges the realities of climate change. We know what is happening in our communities. The increasing amount of flooding, droughts, wildfires, and extreme weather events are frightening to all of us.

In my State of Maryland, I can point to one community, Ellicott City, which has seen two 100-year floods in less than 24 months. The situation is dire, and we need to act on it.

The legislation before us provides \$18 billion in reducing carbon emissions and strengthening resilience and building electric charging stations and alternative fuel infrastructure. That is what we need to do, and I am pleased that the legislation addresses those issues.

In a second area, I was pleased that this bill has a significant increase in the transportation alternative programs that I authored. This increased funding will make it easier for our local governments to move forward on projects that are important to their priorities. We are talking about better sidewalks and bike paths and dealing with safety.

We are seeing an alarming increase in fatalities on our highways and roads and community roads. The TAP program will allow us to deal with those issues. We all need to be able to get around our community without using our cars, and the TAP program makes this a priority so we can enjoy our communities and we have local decision making in the use of our transportation funds.

I am also very pleased that this legislation has a justice component to it. I worked long and hard with Senator CARPER and others in dealing with reconnecting our communities that had been divided because of highways that had been put in a community that did not help that community. When we find out the communities that are most disproportionately affected, they are generally minority communities.

I will give you a good example. Let me use my hometown of Baltimore City. A highway was built in the 1960s that was never completed. We call it the "highway to nowhere." It is the Franklin-Mulberry Corridor. If you go to West Baltimore, you will see this gully that is a blight to the community. It divides communities. Three thousand residents, mostly African-American, are directly impacted by this "highway to nowhere." It isolates neighborhoods such as Harlem Park. This legislation provides a billion dollars as a start to reconnecting communities that have been divided by highways.

I know this is good news for the people of Baltimore and these communities and, for other communities

around the Nation where the transportation program has hurt their community, not helped their community.

As I pointed out, there is increased investments in all of our modes of transportation.

This past week, I was with Secretary Buttigieg in Baltimore and with Senator VAN HOLLEN. The Port of Baltimore is the economic engine of our community. Hundreds of thousands of jobs directly depend upon it. Baltimore is prepared for the super-Panamax. Thanks to the partnership with the Federal Government, this legislation will allow us to be more competitive in our ports, creating more jobs in our community.

I also pointed out the Howard Street Tunnel that was recently authorized under an INFRA grant, which will allow double-stacking going through a tunnel that is over 100 years old, through downtown Baltimore. This will make our community much more competitive. This bill provides additional funding for INFRA grants.

And then Maryland, like every State in this Nation, has significant backlogs in dealing with our bridges. I can mention the American Legion Bridge, right around here, or the Johnson Bridge, in Southern Maryland, and the list goes on and on and on. This bill will allow us to get to some of those bridges.

Let me talk a moment, if I might, about transit. We need public transit. Our workers need to be able to get to work. We need to be much more sensitive to our environment and getting people out of their automobiles. We waste too much time in congestion. I can't tell you how many hours are wasted every day because of unnecessary congestion. Transit—public transit—helps us deal with those challenges.

This bill takes a quantum leap forward on the transit programs. I was particularly pleased that it includes a reauthorization of the WMATA program for the transit system in this region. I call it the Nation's transit system, since it is used so much by Federal workers in order to get to work. It extends the authorization of \$150 million a year from the Federal Government through this decade.

Particularly, I want to thank my colleagues in this region, Senators WARNER and KAINE and VAN HOLLEN. The four of us worked together to make sure we got the reauthorization included in this legislation.

Then, I want to acknowledge and I want to thank particularly Senator BROWN for his help on this. There is now language in this bill that will allow those lines that were previously eligible for capital contributions but did not go forward to be able to be reconsidered for Federal partnerships in capital construction on transit.

We have a rapid rail line in Baltimore City, known as the Red Line, that was stopped by our Governor. We are hopeful that we can restart that. It is needed for dealing with public trans-

it in Baltimore. That project would then now be eligible for consideration for Federal funding. And I would hope that the leadership in Maryland would take advantage of this opportunity and put the Red Line back in the equation.

I want to talk a little bit about water projects. The Environment and Public Works Committee bill that we worked on, which is the basis of this bill on water infrastructure, passed this body by a vote of 89-2. It deals with the Drinking Water and Wastewater Infrastructure Act, increasing funding in all those categories.

We have tremendous backlogs in water infrastructure in our community. We have waterlines that are over 100 years old still being used in our communities. This bill will help us deal with that backlog. It includes authorizations that I sponsored, including affordability.

I want to thank Senator WICKER, my cosponsor on this.

This would allow grants so that low-income families can afford their water bills. I can tell you that in Maryland and in many other communities around the Nation, people can no longer afford their water bills because so much pressure has been put on the ratepayers. This bill will set up a pilot program similar to a LIHEAP program to help low-income families deal with their water costs.

I also authored an authorization bill for resiliency grants with Senator CAPITO to deal with extreme weather conditions and cyber security issues, and I was pleased to see that included in the legislation.

I do want to express my disappointment. There are things in this bill I am sure all of us are not satisfied with. I was disappointed that the bill does not fund those new authorized programs, as was included in the legislation that passed this body and was recommended by the Environment and Public Works Committee. I hope we will have a chance during the appropriations process to get funding for these new authorized programs.

I was pleased that President Biden's initiative to remove lead pipes was included. I can tell you that in Baltimore, we have significant lead pipe issues, particularly in our school system, and I am glad to see that those programs will be funded.

I was pleased also that we are moving ahead on PFOS, which is a pollutant in our community as a result of Federal installations. I was pleased to see that we will be able to move forward in that.

And then broadband, we all know we need broadband infrastructure. It is included in this bill. The Brookings Institution indicates that in the spring of 2020, when we went into lockdown in our schools, 12 million out of 55 million students did not have access to classes online. That is a shocking number, and look at what they lost during this past year.

In Maryland, it is estimated that as many as 324,000 people in rural Mary-

land do not have access to broadband, and 96,000 households in the Baltimore region do not have access to broadband. We must do better. Our goal should be that every house should have access to high-speed internet, affordable internet. This legislation moves us forward on both access and affordability on broadband. That is critically important, and I am glad to see that it is included.

As much as I support this legislation, I have to express my disappointment as to how this bill is paid for. As chairman of the Small Business Committee, I helped develop the programs that helped small businesses during COVID-19. They were lifesavers for small business. It saved small businesses. It saved our community. It saved jobs, and it saved the growth engine for innovation in our community.

One tool that we used that was extremely important was the Economic Injury Disaster Loan Program and Advance Program. Over 4 million EIDL loans have been granted, in excess of \$230 billion. These grants help save businesses. These loans help save businesses. These are for the smaller of the small businesses. They are the ones that use it. These are low-interest, 30-year loans. We have had 6 million small businesses take advantage of the EIDL Advance Program, \$23 billion. These are the differences between staying afloat or going under. The GAO estimated this past week that 86 percent of the EIDL loans went to our most vulnerable small businesses, 10 employees or less.

So why am I talking about it? Because this bill takes away the \$13.5 billion from the EIDL Program—the EIDL loan program—just at the time where we have small businesses that are going to need these loans. We see an increase in wildfires. Hurricane season is coming. We are not through COVID-19 yet, and yet they take away these funds. These are the most leveraged funds we have available. For the few Federal dollars we put into it, we leverage much larger amounts of loans.

Do we really want to cut back on the ability to help small businesses through these long-term loans? Unfortunately, taking this money away does exactly that.

In addition, it takes \$17.5 billion from the Advance Program under EIDL. These are the grants that go to small businesses that can't afford to take out loans.

Now, we know under a previous administration, they put a \$150,000 cap on the EIDL loan program and \$1,000 per employee on the Advance Program. Well, the Biden administration wants to increase the size of the loans up to the first \$500,000 and then \$2 million but also to give \$10,000 to the businesses that need it the most under advances.

We have taken this money away—in total, about \$35 billion. It is going to make it virtually impossible for us to be able to do what we need to do for

small businesses. That is not right, and we are going to need to do something about it.

I might point out that we have the Restaurant Revitalization Act—and everyone here was very proud to help our restaurants—that has been oversubscribed. We are going to need a lot more money to be put into that program. Yet you are taking away our capacity in this bill to help fund small businesses. That is not right, and I hope I will continue to work with my colleagues so we can find a path forward to help America's small businesses.

We all talk about helping small businesses. Here is one example where we took the step in the wrong direction. We don't have to choose between building modern infrastructure or helping small businesses. We can do both, and I am disappointed at this moment that we are not going to be able to do everything we need to do to help the small business communities in our country.

I hope I will be able to revisit this at a later time. But it doesn't dull my enthusiasm for this very important legislation that I urge my colleagues to support. It will make a quantum leap forward in America's competitiveness and create more jobs for America's future.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

Mr. CASSIDY. Madam President, I would like to rise and speak to the infrastructure bill that is before us and, specifically, about a component of the infrastructure bill. My colleague, earlier, Senator TUBERVILLE from Alabama, said that when he goes home he speaks to people in his State, and he always gets a consistent message. I, too, get that consistent message: better jobs, greater safety for their family, and a better future for our country. And this infrastructure package addresses those concerns.

Now, the infrastructure package is about roads and bridges and highways, ports and waterways, increased access to broadband in areas that don't have it now, flood mitigation, coastal restoration. These are things that will contribute to better jobs, more safety, and a better future for our country.

But, first, let me dispel some myths. There are some misconceptions out there about this bill. One misconception is that it is somehow the same as the \$3.5 trillion bill that people have heard about that Democrats have proposed, increasing taxes to a record basis and increasing our national debt when obviously we are pushing up on the debt limit. This is not that bill.

This bill is about roads and bridges and broadband and flood protection. That bill is about everything else. This bill is about improving the quality of life for our families and improving the future for our country. That bill is about a sugar high on an economy which is already in an inflationary mode. These are two different bills. So

I am speaking about the one that has 86-percent approval in two straight polls by the American citizens.

The other concern is that this will contribute to inflation. Again, that is confusing it with the \$3.5 trillion wish list that my Democratic colleagues have. No, the bill that we are proposing, with \$550 billion in new spending over 5 years for roads, bridges, and highways, is judged to not be inflationary, to actually improve our economy over time. Lastly, that somehow this infrastructure bill that we propose is somehow Republicans playing along with Democrats in a way that is bad for our country.

Let me point out that President Trump proposed a \$1.5 trillion infrastructure bill. We put up \$550 billion in new spending. He proposed \$1.5 trillion. Only 5 percent of his was paid for, whereas ours is paid for.

To make the point, this is something that Republicans have proposed in the past, that Democrats have proposed in the past, and this version is something which Democrats and Republicans can support. It is paid for, and it does help the American people. How does it help the American people? It gives them better jobs, increases the safety of their families, and gives a better future for our country.

Let me give some ideas about how that can occur. There is \$110 billion for roads, bridges, and highways, not just to repair some, to construct some others, but also for the safety of those that are being rebuilt or being built—\$110 billion.

We speak about jobs and safety and a better future. Clearly, we talked about safety. Think about the jobs that will be created by this construction of these highways. Think about the better future because these roads and bridges will last for decades. Some person who is now a child will drive over a bridge as an adult, and her life will be better because of the highway that this money paid for.

There is \$10 billion for ports and waterways, those liquid highways that take our goods from our country to around the world and bring those goods from around the world back to our country, along the way creating jobs for hundreds of thousands of Americans.

By the way, transporting products by water is the most environmentally sound way to transport goods.

This investment in our ports and waterways—again, creating jobs, increasing the safety—also gives us a better future for our economy, a better future for our workers, a better future for our families, and a better future for our country.

There is \$16 billion for the Army Corps of Engineers for, among other things, to address coastal erosion, which is occurring nationwide. My State has lost more land mass than any other State in the Nation. My State has lost as much land as is in the entire State of Delaware. But other States are losing land, too.

I saw a picture recently of the Gold Coast, that very swank area in the city of Chicago on Lake Michigan, and it showed how the coastline had eroded over time, and now, waves from Lake Michigan are lapping up onto the road in front of these very expensive apartment complexes. This is not on the Atlantic, the Pacific, or the Gulf of Mexico; this is on a Great Lake. I saw another picture of the beach off of North Carolina, which in the last 150 years has receded—I think it is 500 feet. So homes that formerly had a distant view of the water now have waves coming up to their lawn. That is happening nationwide—no place more than my State in Louisiana.

This bill makes a significant investment in coastal erosion and protecting those people who live on the coastlines. It will create jobs as this is addressed. It will increase the safety of those folks who live in such areas. It gives a better future for our country.

There is \$65 billion for broadband, prioritizing those places without service and those places with poor service. I think of a place in my own State; for example, Opelousas, LA, a small town on I-49. Think of a parent there who wants her daughter to be able to study Mandarin Chinese. There might be people there who speak Mandarin Chinese, but they are not the people teaching school. If she has broadband internet, she gets the same educational experience as someone who lives in New Orleans or Baton Rouge or Shreveport. We need to give every child in this country the same access to that educational opportunity.

I am a doctor. Most people know that. I also think of the expansion of telehealth and telemental health. Right now, our country has a shortage of adolescent psychiatrists. If we have rural broadband or broadband in areas of our cities which are currently poorly served, the adolescent psychiatrist can be in her office in Lafayette, LA, doing a visit, an interview with a child who lives in DeRidder. A place that won't have a pediatric or adolescent psychiatrist has access to real-time visits because of the money that is in this bill.

Economic development. I once spoke to somebody who was thinking of setting up a distribution center in North Louisiana in a place ideally situated to get all the towns around, but it did not have broadband internet. With this bill, that economic development project takes root because now that investor has the ability to manage inventory to receive orders and to communicate with drivers, all because rural broadband has been made a reality—creating jobs, increasing safety, giving that community and our country a better future.

Let me just mention one more thing in the economic aspect and safety aspect of this. There is money for sewer, water, and for drainage. If I think of the four corners of my State, but I am sure every person could think of the four corners of their State—and I think

of Hawaii as being a round State, so I am not sure I even think of those four corners—but if I think of New Orleans, Shreveport, Monroe, and Lake Charles and all points in between, there was a pent-up demand to address water and sewer and drainage. This bill puts the money out there, which can be combined with other appropriations, which can meet the needs for those folks in my community.

I also want to emphasize some of the environmental aspects of this bill. We have billions being put forward to Superfund and brownfield sites. Now, Louisiana has 27 priority sites of those nationwide requiring funding for the Superfund or brownfield.

We also have 4.75 billion to cap abandoned oil wells. That will improve conditions not only in Louisiana but across the Nation.

It also includes the bill I wrote with Senator COONS of Delaware called the SCALE Act. The SCALE Act helps build this carbon dioxide pipeline that will take CO₂ from these manufacturing plants that are producing a product that emits CO₂, and it would build pipelines to sequester that carbon dioxide beneath the ground or to allow that CO₂ to be used in another product line, putting to work pipefitters, decreasing the carbon intensity of our environment, and giving a better future for our planet—jobs, safety, and a better future.

I have already mentioned the \$16 billion going to the Army Corps of Engineers for coastal restoration and other projects.

This bill is an example of what Congress should do. It is focused upon jobs and safety and a better quality of life. This is good for the American worker. It is good for American families. It is good for the United States of America.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, in a State as big as mine, reliable transportation infrastructure is absolutely essential. We are home to both the largest network of highways, as well as the largest number of bridges in the country. We are also a major hub for imports and exports both along the gulf coast and the southern border.

As we continue to welcome more new Texans every day, the strain on our infrastructure is growing. It takes a lot of planning and maintenance to get all 29 million Texans, our visitors, and crucial cargo around the State safely and efficiently. When you add in broadband, airports, levees, waterways, it is easy to see how big an undertaking this entire process is.

I continue to hear from my constituents back home, like I am sure we all do, about the need for Federal funding to help repair, maintain, and expand infrastructure across our States. But we just can't keep adding expenses to the taxpayers' credit card. We have to figure out how to pay for it.

Earlier this year, President Biden floated his idea for an absolutely mas-

sive infrastructure bill totaling \$2.6 trillion. It included a broad range of controversial and, frankly, overpriced programs, all funded by massive tax hikes on the American taxpayer.

The good news is, that is not the bill we are considering today. A bipartisan group of our colleagues worked with the White House to find common ground and get a bill to the floor with support from both sides. The 2,700-page text was just released last night, and I know, like everybody else, I am still in the process with my staff of evaluating just how it will impact my State and our Nation.

Our colleagues who negotiated and drafted this legislation put in a lot of long hours and hard work to reach an agreement. I commend them for their efforts.

I am eager to see a score from the Congressional Budget Office to provide a better understanding of the true cost of this legislation. But even the proponents who negotiated this deal concede that, at least before the \$118 billion transfer from the general revenue fund last night, that even then, only about half of it was paid for.

I believe there, so far, have been some missed opportunities, one being reforms to the highway trust fund itself. For years, the highway trust fund has faced major shortfalls and, to a serious degree, Texans have footed the bill for those shortfalls because we are one of the States that receive less than we contribute. For every dollar we put in the highway trust fund, only 95 cents comes back to my State. That is not the same treatment of every State. In fact, we received the lowest rate of return than any other State.

I don't think it is a stretch to say it is unfair that Texans subsidize infrastructure projects in every other State, but that is only part of the issue here. The highway trust fund has been operating in the red for more than a decade. The current state of the highway trust fund is unsustainable, and unless something changes, we are going to be in dire straits—even more dire straits in just a few years.

The importance of the highway trust fund is that we have always believed in a user fee model when it comes to infrastructure. The people who use it are the ones to pay to maintain it and expand it. But rather than make reforms to the formula to make the fund solvent, this bill throws more borrowed money at the problem.

As I said, just this morning, I learned that another \$118 billion was proposed to be transferred to the highway trust fund with no reforms to help put it back on sound financial footing. This is quite a step away from the user fee model where those who use the infrastructure are the ones who pay for it. This is a transfer from general revenue, from the taxpayer, into the highway trust fund. This inclusion was a big surprise to me, and in all the conversations we have had about this legislation over the past several weeks, I

didn't hear a word about a highway trust fund bailout.

The massive bill, as I said, was dropped last night, and we are still trying to comb through the 2,700 pages of text, which, at this point, appears to be full of surprises, and I will just mention one of them.

This bill should not be rushed through the Senate without providing all Members a chance to read it, to understand it, and offer their suggestions to improve it. I have been working with some of our colleagues on amendments to this legislation to provide legitimate pay-fors. Since this bill didn't go through the regular committee process but was really cobbled together by a negotiation—again, in a bipartisan fashion that I commend for their efforts—but it makes it all the more important that since this is the first time that many of us have seen the entire 2,700-page bill, that it be subject to an open amendment process.

This legislation will have impact on every State in the country, and every Member of the Senate should have the opportunity to weigh in and offer changes. Members of the bipartisan group have committed to a process that allows Senators on both sides to offer changes to this bill, and in the days ahead, I hope the majority leader will allow that to happen, and we will have a robust amendment process.

GUN VIOLENCE

Madam President, on another matter, my State is no stranger to tragedy. In recent years, we have experienced hurricanes, tornadoes, a crippling winter freeze, and other natural disasters that have tested our resiliency. Sadly, too, some of our communities have experienced mass shootings.

Tomorrow, Texans will mark a solemn anniversary: 2 years since a gunman stormed into a Walmart in El Paso, TX, and opened fire. Twenty-three people died; dozens were injured; and the lives of countless El Pasoans were forever changed. My friend, the former mayor, Dee Margo, said at the time:

Hate will not overcome love. Hate will not define who we are.

This shooting was, undoubtedly, hate in its purest form. The shooter was a White supremacist who carried out an act that could only be described as domestic terrorism. Our Hispanic neighbors and friends were purposely targeted, and both Texans and Mexicans were killed by this wicked individual.

In the face of this pure evil, El Pasoans responded with love. Off-duty surgeons and doctors rushed to the hospital to save as many lives as they could. El Pasoans were comforted by their faith leaders, like Father Marquez, who stayed up all night with 17 families and sat beside them as they were told their loved ones had not made it. And hundreds of Texans lined up to give blood. I was proud to be one of those 3,000 donations at the Vitalant centers in El Paso and Las Cruces.

A young El Pasoan, Ruben Martinez, was just in sixth grade when this mass

shooting took place. In the days that followed, he created the El Paso Challenge, where he and his mom performed 23 random acts of kindness in honor of the 23 victims. Two years later, they are still keeping up that tradition and recently gave out roses at San Jacinto Plaza to remind people to spread love and kindness.

El Paso, a community that saw the face of evil, unequivocally chose love, and I am grateful to Texans like Ruben who have continued to make the choice, day after day, to honor the lives of the 23 whom we lost.

As we remember the lives that were lost just 2 years ago and the families and the victims that many of us comforted in the hospitals in the aftermath of this, we are also—we also carry the painful reminder that justice has not yet been served. Last week, the Federal hearing for the accused shooter was postponed until November, and the State's case continues to await a trial date due to delays stemming from COVID's impact on our court system.

My heart is with the families and friends looking for closure who must now deal with this additional delay in justice being served.

I know I speak for all Texans when I say that the 2-year anniversary approaches tomorrow; that, as it approaches, we all stand in solidarity with El Pasoans and remember the enduring strength and spirit of this vibrant community.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. DUCKWORTH). The Senator from Pennsylvania.

Mr. CASEY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as if in morning business.

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

REMEMBERING MIKE ENZI

Mr. CASEY. Madam President, I wanted to offer some remarks about two of our former colleagues who passed away, and I know many have already spoken about both of their lives and their contributions, their public service. And so I am not speaking today about the pending legislative business but just wanted to make sure that I took some time today to talk about both of these individuals. I will go in the order of their passing just in the last week, really.

The first is the former Senator from Wyoming, Mike Enzi, who served in this institution since being elected in 1996 and then left the Senate after 2020 was concluded. I will have a longer statement that I will ask consent to put in the RECORD. But I just wanted to share some personal reflections because sometimes, when you outline someone's career in a position, whether it is in government or otherwise, that doesn't really tell the story about who they were, and we all have different impressions, but it is remarkable how often, in the last couple of days, Members of both parties in the Senate have commented on Mike Enzi as a person.

I said last weekend at the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee, of which he and I were both members and overlapped for a number of years, that Mike Enzi was the paragon of decency, and that is probably an understatement. "Decency" isn't a word that is often attached to public officials, unfortunately, but in Mike's case, it applied. He was a decent human being and treated everyone with respect, and we could all learn more than one lesson from the way he treated people and the way he conducted himself as a person and the way he conducted himself as a U.S. Senator.

Just in terms of work, a number of us can share stories about issues we worked with Mike on. I can share one or two.

One, in particular, I remember a bill that had not been "reauthorized." That is another fancy Washington word for taking a policy or taking a program and, in a sense, reinstituting it by updating it and, maybe, getting authorization to have either new policy or new appropriations or additional appropriations. But we wanted to reauthorize the Perkins Career and Technical Education Program, but the bill had not been acted on. The proposal, the bill itself, or versions of the bill were around for something like, oh, gosh, about 12 years, between 2006 and 2018, before we finally got it done.

I won't walk through the policy but just share a personal story that, when Mike Enzi and I were working on the Senate version of it—there was another version in the House very similar, if not identical, but it needed work in both Chambers—we were working with then-Chairman Alexander, Lamar Alexander and the ranking member, PATTY MURRAY. So the four of us had to work very hard to get it done. But once it was done, I remember standing here on the floor, and Mike Enzi was standing on that side of the floor talking about what we had done. And as I was paying tribute to his work and commending him, I thought: My goodness. I may be getting him in trouble back home by having a Democrat compliment him so much, and he was complimenting my work. But I remember that because it was a typical—in some ways, a very typical Mike Enzi work product. It defied resolution for a long time, but he stayed at it, and he stayed in the room, so to speak, until we had it done.

So I want to thank him for that work that will allow more and more Americans to have the opportunity to have that career in technical education that they would not have or at least not would have it in the manner that the bill set forth, which was a dramatic and substantial improvement in that kind of career in technical education, from a Federal Government perspective.

The final thought that I will share—because I want to be brief because I also have a statement to submit—are on our budget votes.

As many Americans know, if they are watching—and maybe they aren't

watching when we do a budget resolution, but it is vote after vote, hour after hour, often well into not just the evening but well into the next morning. And to preside over that, as Mike was at the time as the chairman of the Budget Committee, I just recall him standing at the lectern, hour after hour, having to comment on every amendment, whether he opposed it or supported it, and if he opposed it, of course, he had to make an argument against it. That is part of the job of being the chair, standing there all those hours.

But even when he was making the case against Democratic amendments, which was often, and stating his opposition, there was no snarl; there was no—rarely political rhetoric. He would just state his objections very forthrightly and very soberly and then move on. There was no finger-pointing, no demonization of the other point of view. So I always appreciated how he did that in an environment where there often is that kind of invective flying back and forth.

So, Mike Enzi, when I say he was the paragon of decency, that applied to his whole life, and we know how terribly his family must miss him and how his State mourns the loss of Mike Enzi, but that loss was felt in a bipartisan fashion here on the Senate floor and within the Senate family.

Madam President, today, I wish to pay tribute to the distinguished life and career of Senator Michael B. Enzi, who passed away on July 26, 2021. Senator Enzi was an honorable public servant and decent man who always had a kind word for everyone in our shared office hallway in the Russell Senate Office Building. I was privileged to have spent 13 years working alongside him.

While Senator Enzi was born in Bremerton, WA, in 1944, he grew up in Wyoming, the same State he would devote more than four decades of his life to by serving in local, State, and Federal Government. He graduated with a bachelor's degree in accounting from George Washington University in 1966. Senator Enzi was dedicated to his education and his sense of civic responsibility, and he earned an MBA in retail marketing from the University of Denver in 1968 while also serving in the Wyoming Air National Guard from 1967 to 1973. After receiving his graduate degree, he followed his father's footsteps and worked as a shoe salesman and business owner.

Senator Enzi's long career in government started when he was elected mayor of Gillette, WY, in 1974. He served in the Wyoming State Legislature as a member of the House of Representatives and State Senate beginning in 1987. He was elected to the U.S. Senate in 1996 and would go on to serve 4 consecutive terms. It was during the 110th Congress that we became colleagues and began our committee work together, first on the Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs and later on the Committee on Finance and the Committee

on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions. Senator Enzi loved “solving problems for folks in Wyoming and America,” and I am honored to have had the opportunity to work with him on bipartisan solutions to help Americans.

The passing of Senator Enzi is a terrible loss for his wife, Diana; his children, Amy, Emily and Brad; his four grandchildren, Trey, Lilly, Megan, and Allison. He will be dearly missed by his family, friends, and former staff. I echo my Senate colleagues and fellow citizens when I say that we are grateful for his service to our Nation. May he rest in peace.

REMEMBERING CARL LEVIN

Madam President, and then just some additional comments on another colleague we lost this year, this time a Democratic Senator, Carl Levin, who served the people of Michigan starting in 1978—I think, almost immediately after serving on the city council in Detroit—and I will submit a statement about his life as well.

But Carl, as well, was decent and honorable, and I have no doubt that people in both parties had that same impression of him, dealing with him—again, I will say—as a person and as a U.S. Senator, as a public official.

Carl Levin had a work ethic which was second to none. I don’t ever remember him in a setting where he wasn’t working. It was as if he was never relaxed and kind of turned off. He was always on the floor, trying to get support for an amendment, trying to get support for a bill. And the difference between Carl and many of us is that he knew the detail of that bill sometimes as well or better, maybe, than the staff. He knew every part of the policy. If he were allowed to be on the Senate floor, with his jacket off, he would roll up his sleeves.

Someone was telling a story the other day how that was kind of an image we had of Carl; that his sleeves were always rolled up when he was working, but, of course, on the Senate floor, he wasn’t allowed to do that. But it was emblematic, I think, that rolling up of his sleeves when he was traveling or addressing constituents or the like—it was emblematic of his work ethic and the scholarship that he put into the work he did for the people of Michigan and often for, of course, the workers. There have been stories that have been told in the last couple of days about him carrying around his union card when he worked in a factory as a young man.

He never forgot those workers. It wasn’t just a symbol of a union card in his wallet; he never ever stopped fighting for them—workers in Detroit, whether they are autoworkers or otherwise.

So that is something we pay tribute to today, and his work on behalf of those who were powerless or those with little power, those who don’t have a lobbyist, those who don’t have the opportunity to influence legislation di-

rectly—Carl Levin always made sure that their voice was heard.

And as much as he was a supporter—and I think a consistent and strong supporter—of a strong national security, no Member of the Senate could say they did more than Carl Levin to support our national security, both in terms of what he supported, but in terms of his leadership on the Armed Services Committee, and ultimately as the chair of the committee, working in a very bipartisan fashion to keep us safe, working with Senators like John McCain and others, Democrat and Republican alike.

But even though in the midst of—or in the course of supporting national security you deal with big institutions, big defense contractors, big, powerful interests that he worked with and made sure were part of the best national security in the world, he was also very tough on those same big institutions; because, as many of you know—many people here in the Senate know, Carl was the chairman of what is known as the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations, maybe the most powerful subcommittee in the entire U.S. Senate, or at least for many years it was.

And as the chairman of that subcommittee, Carl Levin held the feet of powerful interests—held their feet to the fire over and over again with a cross-examination skill that very few Senators would possess, even Senators who were good lawyers.

And Carl Levin would not let those powerful interests up for air if he thought they had information that he needed to extract from them in the public interest. And anyone who appeared before him knew how tough he could be on the most powerful people and the most powerful institutions in the country, if not in the world.

So we appreciate Carl Levin’s decency and the honorable service that he rendered, but we also appreciate how hard he fought for people who didn’t have power.

Mr. CARPER. Would the Senator yield the floor?

While the Senator is still on the floor, we are talking about the serious side of Carl, and there is also a lighter side of Carl, as you know, and I just want to recall one of those today.

I was elected to—been State treasurer and elected to Congress in ‘82, and one of the Members of my professional class was Sandy Levin, Carl’s brother—his older brother—who apparently had run for Governor—not successful—and later on got elected to the House, and I think he served as the Ways and Means Committee chair.

But, anyway, so I got to meet Carl pretty early, although he didn’t join me here until about 20 years ago. But he is from Detroit and that area and loves the Detroit—loved the Detroit Tigers, and so do I. And try to figure out why an Ohio State boy would end up being a big Tigers fan, but I was.

Ended up on the Homeland Security Governmental Affairs Committee, and

he was in charge of the Subcommittee on Investigations, and I ended up being the chairman of the committee; worked pretty close with Tom Coburn and others.

And Carl asked me—he said he wanted me to come up—as chairman, he wanted me to come up and tour the border—the U.S.-Canadian border, and right there by Detroit on boat, by water, by helicopters, and so forth.

I said: Sure. Count me in.

We just had one—just one heck of a day. It was a lot of fun and very informative. Got to spend time with Coast Guard people and others just very much involved in our border security.

And late in the day, it was opening day of baseball season, and the Tigers were playing in Minnesota, the opening game. It was an afternoon game.

And after we had finished our day’s activities, it was moving on toward supertime. He said: Let’s go to this area of Detroit where they have all these Mexican restaurants, and we will have dinner.

And when we got to the restaurant, the Tigers game was on the radio, and he said let’s have a couple of libations and sit in his car and listen to the Tigers game, and so we did.

And the game—we were in the 7th or 8th inning. We stayed until the very end, and it turned out to be a very sweet ending and the Tigers won the ballgame and we had a couple libations and some laughs. And then we went inside, and for, like, six bucks we bought two of the biggest dinners I have ever seen, and I had a wonderful time.

But I loved Carl. Loved Sandy too. And the idea that Carl has left us is real sad. Barbara, his wife, wonderful woman, thank her for sharing her husband with us.

Here is an issue, on a more serious note, called beneficial interests, which involved shell corporations and some criminal people who are doing untoward—maybe illicit, illegal things. They are using shell corporations to try to do those bad activities. And there was a question about who should have the authority, who should be responsible for making sure that no nefarious activities were taking place because of these shell corporations.

Delaware happens to be a State where there are a lot of corporations. I think half of the New York Stock Exchange, half of the Fortune 500 are incorporated in Delaware. So we had a real interest in doing this, but doing it in a way that doesn’t unduly burden the State.

This was an issue that we didn’t let come between our friendship. This was an issue that lasted and lasted and lasted and lasted.

And Carl, when he went to meet our Maker, about a year or so before, we resolved that issue, and it took years to resolve that issue. And he was tenacious, his staff was tenacious, and, frankly, so were a lot of other folks, but we got the job done in a way that

I think protects the public interest and makes sure that government, State and local and Federal, are doing their job.

And so, Carl, if you are listening, buddy, our Tigers are doing better this year, and hopefully they will continue to.

But thank you for raising those points.

Mr. CASEY. I want to thank the senior Senator from Delaware for those kind, personal reflections about Carl Levin.

Madam President, today I wish to pay tribute to the life and career of Senator Carl Levin, who passed away on July 29, 2021. As the longest-serving senator in Michigan history, Senator Levin was a role model as a person and as a public official.

Senator Levin was born on June 28, 1934 in Detroit, MI, the city he would call home for his entire life and continually fight for during his six terms in the Senate. I am proud to say that he received his bachelor's degree in political science at Swarthmore College, which is located in my home state of Pennsylvania, in 1956. During his undergraduate education he worked as a taxi driver and on an auto factory line. He would continue to keep his union card in his wallet for many years, a habit emblematic of his commitment to American workers. After graduating from Harvard Law School in 1959, he practiced law for several years before becoming an assistant attorney general and general counsel for the Michigan Civil Rights Commission, beginning his long career as a defender of civil rights.

Senator Levin first entered elected office as a member of Detroit City Council in 1969. In 1978, he was elected to the U.S. Senate, where he would earn a reputation as an effective legislator, tenacious investigator and person of integrity. He understood that serving in political office is a public trust and demanded the same degree of accountability and transparency from corporations and government that his constituents came to expect from him. Whether on the floor of the Senate or abroad during our trip to Afghanistan and Pakistan in 2008 when he served as Chairman of the Senate Committee on Armed Services, Senator Levin led with humility and a sharp intellect.

Senator Levin's service in the Senate was the kind of public service we should all emulate and his death is a loss for our Nation and, of course, his loving family. My thoughts and prayers are with his wife, Barbara; his three daughters, Kate, Laura and Eric; his six grandchildren; and his nephew, Congressman Andy Levin, as they mourn his passing. May we all learn from Senator Levin's example, and may he rest in peace.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware.

AMENDMENT NOS. 2133 AND 2162 TO AMENDMENT NO. 2137

Mr. CARPER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the fol-

lowing amendments be called up to the substitute and be reported by number: No. 1, Padilla-Moran, No. 2133, Indian health; No. 2, Thune-Tester, No. 2162, communications workers; further, that at 5:30 today, the Senate vote in relation to the amendments in the order listed, with no amendments in order to these amendments prior to a vote in relation to the amendment, with 60 affirmative votes required for adoption, and 2 minutes of debate equally divided prior to each vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mrs. CAPITO. Madam President, I don't have an objection. I just wanted to say to the—to Chairman CARPER here and others in the bipartisan group and all of us here: We are ready to get this thing started.

This is a great way for Members to say what they like and what they don't like, and the amendment process is on its way.

Thank you.

Mr. CARPER. Madam President, I would say thank you to the ranking member for those comments. I, too, am ready to get to work. This is a good way to do it, a couple of amendments that I think a lot of us can support.

But I appreciate the consent to lock in votes on these two amendments. We will start with these and work to have votes on others as well, hopefully sooner rather than later.

I yield the floor.

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

AMENDMENT NO. 2133 TO AMENDMENT NO. 2137

The clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Delaware [Mr. CARPER], for Mr. PADILLA, proposes an amendment numbered 2133 to amendment No. 2137.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To amend the Indian Health Care Improvement Act to expand the funding authority for renovating, constructing, and expanding certain facilities)

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ . EXPANDING THE FUNDING AUTHORITY FOR RENOVATING, CONSTRUCTING, AND EXPANDING CERTAIN FACILITIES.

Section 509 of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act (25 U.S.C. 1659) is amended—

(1) by striking "minor" before "renovations"; and

(2) by striking "to assist" and all that follows through "standards".

AMENDMENT NO. 2162 TO AMENDMENT NO. 2137

(Purpose: To address the workforce needs of the telecommunications industry.)

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Delaware [Mr. CARPER], for Mr. THUNE, proposes an amendment numbered 2162 to amendment No. 2137.

(The amendment is printed in today's RECORD under "Text of Amendments.")

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

H.R. 3684

Mr. MERKLEY. Madam President, I come to the floor today to bring attention to the wildfires raging in our Western States, devastating community after community. I am also here to call on my colleagues to use the ongoing infrastructure discussions to take the swift, bold action necessary not just to confront the current crisis but to address the root cause and help save others from having to endure similar fires and tragedies in the future.

For nearly a month now, the Bootleg Fire, pictured here, has been the biggest of 91 fires burning across 12 States. It has been raging in Southern Oregon. It has burned about 415,000 acres. Translate that into square miles. That is 646 square miles. Translate that. That is an area about 20 miles wide and 30 miles long, half the size of the State of Rhode Island reduced to ash and smoke.

It is ranching country. There are not a lot of developed communities, but you still have a lot of homes getting burned, at least 161 homes; double that or roughly double that in outbuildings. Hundreds of vehicles have been destroyed. Thousands of families have been forced to evacuate.

This fire grew so large, it started generating its own weather system. Think about that. Usually, we watch the weather to see how the weather is going to influence the fire. Will rain and storms slow them down? Will humidity slow them down a little? Will dry, hot conditions help them grow or, worst of all, hot and dry with wind? Well, that is not the case with the Bootleg Fire, which created these massive clouds rising more than 30,000 feet into the air, and as the air surges up, then below it, it pulls in air from all around, which feeds oxygen to the inferno. Then, when that air cools and drops down, it pushes the bottom air out, spreading sparks like some living monster sucking in fire, intensifying oxygen, and then spewing out fire-spreading embers as the air cools and descends. It even generates its own lightning storms and spawns fire tornadoes, swirling vortexes of heat and flame.

Fires are an annual occurrence in Oregon, but decade after decade, they are getting a lot worse. There are two major reasons for this. Climate chaos is one, and poor forest management is the other. The forests, due to climate chaos, are drier and more prone to fire. Why are they drier? Because, well, carbon dioxide from burning fossil fuels and methane gas leaking out of our natural gas systems are heating the

planet. So we have to pivot quickly and transition to renewable energy to stop it from getting worse.

But that is a discussion really for another day. Let's focus today on the second part of the challenge, which is forest management.

When fires erupt, we put them out as fast as we can, trying to prevent devastating fires like the Bootleg Fire. But the result of putting fires out fast over decade after decade after decade is that a lot of fuels build up on the floor of the forest.

In addition, we have a lot of forests that are second-growth forests, with trees planted very close together, and they all grow up at about the same height and their canopies are touching each other, which makes it very easy for the fire to spread from tree to tree to tree.

So you throw in the combination of longer, hotter, dryer summers and second-growth forests, and you have the perfect recipe for infernos like the big fires we have been seeing out West.

To reduce the risk of these devastating fires in the short-run, we have two basic tools. One is, we reduce the grass and undergrowth that fuels the fire—we sometimes call that mowing—and then we do prescribed burns, and the second is, we thin the forest.

Now, thinning the forest works better in some forests than in others. For ponderosa pine, it works really well. You spread out those pine trees. They would never have grown so close together. In the old days, when fires regularly swept through, they would kill the younger trees. The older trees would survive, widely spaced trees. They would burn up the fuel on the floor of the forest, and it worked well. Other forests—wetter forests, Douglas fir forests, other types of forests—we are still trying to figure out exactly the best way to do forest management to reduce fire risk. The Bootleg Fire did show the effect of these types of efforts.

Over the last decades, ecologists have been working in the Sycan Marsh Preserve. They have been thinning out the forest, and they have been using prescribed fires. So they have been reducing the number of ponderosa pines to make it a less fire-prone forest.

As the Bootleg Fire came into the preserve, firefighters on the ground report the flames didn't jump as easily or readily from treetop to treetop; they went back to the ground. Going back to the ground, where there had been prescribed fire, they didn't burn as quickly. The fire moved a lot more slowly, and, in addition, it is easier for firefighters to get into the front of the fire.

So the thinning and burning of the Sycan Marsh Preserve are strong proof of why we need to use these tools, with science-informed adjustments resulting in the most effective strategies for different kinds of forests. But, again, those strategies may not work as well in other types of forests, and we need

the best science. I have asked the head of the Forest Service to get us the best science so we can apply the best strategies to make different types of forests more fire-resilient.

But we need to be able to fund such efforts on a much more massive scale. Out in Oregon, we have 2.3 million acres that have been approved environmentally to be treated that aren't treated because we haven't had the funds. So this infrastructure bill is an opportunity to address so much of the work that needs to be done to make the forest more fire-resilient.

Well, I am pleased to say that the bill is going to have quite a bit in it, and I really am pleased with this. I have been pushing for this for years, that we need to spend not millions but billions of dollars in forest management. So \$8 billion of wildfire-related funding is included, and that will go out through the Forest Service and the Department of the Interior; \$2.4 billion for hazardous fuels reduction efforts; \$2.1 billion for efforts to restore ecosystems on a broader scale in a fashion that will help reduce the vulnerability of the forests and other ecosystems to fire; \$1 billion to help fund wildfire mitigation activities for at-risk communities; \$650 million for rehabilitating areas burned by fires; and \$600 million to give firefighters the pay raises they deserve and to increase the year-round workforce.

For years, I have been saying that one of the problems we have is a big attrition rate for firefighters. They go out for a season, and then the job is over, and they have to find other jobs. When they find those other jobs, well, they are not there to fight the fire the next season. Crew bosses are essential. You don't want to lose these experienced crew bosses.

So what is the answer? Well, part of the answer is, let's create year-round jobs with decent pay so that when you are not doing firefighting directly, you are doing fire prevention by working on forest management projects, and I think that idea is starting to gain some traction.

We also have funding in here to increase the collaborative forest landscape restoration projects, CFLR projects. A CFLR collaborative brings together the stakeholders from every perspective—from the environmental side, from the timber side, from all sides in between—and they work out what they refer to as a prescription for a specific forest.

They go out, and in the beginning, when they don't really have a great trust relationship, they go out together, and they will go through the acreage and mark the trees. Then later on, as the trust grows, they write the prescription, and they know it will get implemented as they desire, and they can get a lot more work done. Do you know what? It means this thinning operation, this forest treatment operation, stays out of the courts. That is very important because if we are just

treating forests through timber sales that are always hung up in disputes in the courts, we are not getting the job done.

This effort to increase the role of these collaboratives puts people in the room who have been traditional opponents. They are talking to each other, and they are working out plans together. They find out they actually sometimes like each other. So we need a lot more of these collaboratives.

We have in Oregon close to two dozen collaboratives. Only four are federally funded. So by increasing the funding, we enable more collaboratives to do a lot more work, and that would be a very good thing.

I spoke to the billions of dollars, but you know what—these couple billion dollars is not enough. I will be introducing legislation modeled on the Great American Outdoors Act to fund \$30 billion in hazardous fuel treatments across our public lands over the next 5 years. That is closer to the scale we need to undertake to manage these forests.

It used to be you thought about, well, when do I want to go out and hike on the Pacific Crest Trail? Well, August has the least chance of rain. Now it is like whatever you do, think twice about going out in August because you will be dodging forest fires. It has happened to my wife Mary and me a number of times now. We planned to hike in the southern part of the Pacific Crest Trail, and twice we had to move to the northern part. We hiked in the northern part twice and had to dodge forest fires. One time, it was the fire that erupted and put the whole Columbia Gorge on fire. They had fireworks on the Fourth of July.

Just last year, we were hiking starting on the Warm Springs Reservation, and other hikers said: Hey, did you know that there is already a fire on the Warm Springs Reservation—right where we were. Well, the wind was blowing the other way. We hadn't smelled the smoke. You are out of cell phone range. You are up in the mountains. We hadn't heard that. But it reflects the fact that you have to worry now when hiking because the forest is so vulnerable. It is so dry. It so easily turns into a fire that can move very quickly, especially if there is a wind.

I have worked to get funding for the National Guard to be able to help fight fires over the last 4 years, including 1,500 members of the Oregon National Guard who have been trained. They have been out helping on this Bootleg Fire, so that is great. We have been working to enable FEMA to deliver disaster assistance more quickly to the communities impacted by catastrophic fires.

And we have sat to recognize that we need to tackle the issue of smoke. We didn't used to talk about smoke in Oregon, but it was smoke from burning our grass seed fields, because the way to get grass seed very pure was to burn fields every year. So we had this haze

throughout the summer. Well, it was very unhelpful to people's health to be breathing that smoke. So eventually we said: No, no, no, we are not going to burn the fields in that fashion.

But now we have the smoke from the forest fires, and—wouldn't you know it—when I was home last weekend, I expected to see a lot of smoke. There was a previous moment where I drove 600 miles during the Labor Day fires last year, and I never got out of the smoke for 600 miles. This time, I was in blue skies. And then I looked and saw that the weather patterns were driving the smoke from our fires into Montana, and it was going up in the jet stream. It was swirling around. There was a lot of smoke here in DC from the fires out West.

Well, so it is a national issue. In fact, I guess the index for air quality in New York City surged to 157, and anything above 100 is pretty dangerous. But that just shows the level of challenge that we are addressing.

So we need to tackle the smoke, and that is why I am introducing the Smoke-Ready Communities Act and the Wildfire Smoke Emergency Declaration Act. We need to recognize the threat not just from the fires but also the impact of the smoke on communities. So we need to have a way to respond and create a national emergency related to it. We need to prepare our communities to be ready for the smoke, to have some kind of air-filtered locations where people with asthma and other healthcare conditions can escape and get to clean air when the air quality drops so dramatically.

And we need to protect our farm workers. So I will be introducing the Farmworker Smoke and Heat Protection Act. We lost one of our farm workers due to heat when this heat dome struck Oregon a couple of weeks ago. There in Portland, where my house is, it was 116 degrees, plus a wind that was blowing that turned it into a hairdryer. You stepped outside, and you were just watching the plants just shrivel up.

And we were fortunate. We converted our gas furnace to a heat pump so that we could heat our house with renewable electricity rather than fossil fuels. The side benefit is we got air-conditioning. So we had air-conditioning for the first time. But so many houses in Oregon don't have it. Think about the impact of 116-degree heat in a place where it is rare to have a single day ever break 100 degrees during the summer.

So we need Federal standards related to smoke. We need to work with the Occupational Health and Safety Administration to ensure that farm workers get the assistance they need to be able to work safely.

I can't underscore enough the importance of us coming together as a nation to tackle these western fires. At this moment, the fire season is just beginning in Oregon. It feels like we have been in it forever. It is just July. We have August, September, October.

Well, we just turned the calendar onto August—August, September, October. We had fires starting early in the year, as early as March, burning late in the year. In California, it is a year-round proposition already, and Oregon isn't far behind.

My fervent hope is that with fires engulfing Oregon and California and Idaho Montana and others, it will be a wake-up call that we need in this Chamber to realize that we have a responsibility to act and to act quickly.

We have an opportunity to make an impact, but we have to have the policy knowledge and the political determination to take that quick action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

AMENDMENT NO. 2133

Mr. PADILLA. Madam President, I understand Senator CARPER has already called up the amendment 2133.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is correct.

Mr. PADILLA. Madam President, thank you for the opportunity to speak on this important bipartisan amendment. I want to thank Senators LANKFORD, MORAN, ROUNDS, SCHATZ, FEINSTEIN, and SMITH for joining me in this effort.

Tribal communities face grave and unjust disparities in access to all kinds of infrastructure, but the disparities and access to healthcare and health infrastructure are increasingly stark. This amendment is very simple. It is common sense, in my opinion. It is a technical fix that would allow urban Indian organizations to use the Indian Health Service funds that they already receive for infrastructure and facilities improvements.

So I want to be clear. This amendment would not give urban Indian organizations more funding or take away funding from anybody else. It would simply give them additional flexibility to use the funding they already receive for necessary infrastructure improvements.

Urban Indian organizations provide culturally competent care for over 70 percent of American Indians and Alaska Natives who live in urban centers. Many of those served live in low-income, medically underserved areas. According to recent congressional testimony from the Indian Health Service, "expanding the current authority to be consistent with the authority for other government contractors. . . . would allow [urban Indian organizations] to make renovations, construction, or expansion of facilities necessary to improve the safety and quality of care provided to urban Indian patients."

In fact, the Deputy Director of the Indian Health Service went on to state: Providing [urban Indian organizations] with broader authority . . . to improve their health care facilities will assist in providing the high quality, safe, and culturally relevant health care for the Urban Indian population."

This amendment, I believe, is particularly relevant in the midst of the

COVID-19 pandemic, when items like ventilation, along with social distancing and other infrastructure upgrades, are desperately needed. This is an easy, no-cost, bipartisan way to help ensure that this package bolsters infrastructure in Indian Country, because no infrastructure package would be complete without robust, strategic improvements to Tribal infrastructure. It has the support of the chairman and ranking member of the Indian Affairs Committee, which just held a hearing on this issue last month, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Montana.

AMENDMENT NO. 2162

Mr. TESTER. Madam President, thanks for the recognition. I want to start by thanking Senator JOHN THUNE on this amendment. He and I cosponsored this together.

There is incredible investment in broadband infrastructure in this bill. For obvious reasons, the pandemic has taught us that we need to have better broadband service if we are going to be able to have distance learning, if we are going to have telehealth, and if we are going to have businesses have it and give them the opportunities to be able to expand their customer base.

Well, the challenge out there is workforce, and what this bill will do is it will help us better understand how many folks are actually going to need to be hired to train on this enormous endeavor. It will not only help with workforce, but it will also help to make sure working conditions are safe and the folks are fairly compensated for a hard day's work.

Look, the broadband provisions in this bill are landmark and will create good-paying jobs not only during the building of the infrastructure but also well on for decades and decades past. We need to make sure every community is included and nobody is left behind. This amendment will help us achieve those goals. I would encourage my colleagues to support it.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware.

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

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

AMENDMENT NO. 2133

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will now be 2 minutes of debate, equally divided, prior to a vote in relation to Padilla-Moran amendment No. 2133.

Mr. CARPER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to yield the time back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT NO. 2133

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the amendment.

Mr. CARPER. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER) is necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM) and the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE).

The result was announced—yeas 90, nays 7, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 291 Leg.]

YEAS—90

Baldwin	Hassan	Reed
Barrasso	Hawley	Risch
Bennet	Heinrich	Romney
Blumenthal	Hickenlooper	Rosen
Blunt	Hirono	Rounds
Boozman	Hoeven	Rubio
Brown	Hyde-Smith	Sanders
Burr	Johnson	Sasse
Cantwell	Kaine	Schatz
Capito	Kelly	Schumer
Cardin	King	Scott (FL)
Carper	Klobuchar	Scott (SC)
Casey	Lankford	Shaheen
Cassidy	Leahy	Shelby
Collins	Lujan	Sinema
Coons	Lummis	Smith
Cornyn	Manchin	Stabenow
Cortez Masto	Markey	Sullivan
Cramer	Marshall	Tester
Crapo	McConnell	Thune
Cruz	Menendez	Tillis
Daines	Merkley	Toomey
Duckworth	Moran	Van Hollen
Durbin	Murkowski	Warner
Ernst	Murphy	Warnock
Feinstein	Murray	Warren
Fischer	Ossoff	Whitehouse
Gillibrand	Padilla	Wicker
Grassley	Peters	Wyden
Hagerty	Portman	Young

NAYS—7

Blackburn	Kennedy	Tuberville
Braun	Lee	
Cotton	Paul	

NOT VOTING—3

Booker	Graham	Inhofe
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The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HEINRICH). On this vote, the yeas are 90, the nays are 7.

Under the previous order requiring 60 votes for the adoption of this amendment, the amendment is agreed to.

The amendment (No. 2133) was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 2162

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will now be 2 minutes of debate, equally divided, prior to a vote in relation to the Thune-Tester amendment, No. 2162.

The Senator from South Dakota.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, amendment No. 2162 would aim to address the workforce needs of the telecommunications industry and increase the number of workers available to deploy 5G technology and broadband services to rural areas across the Nation.

In order to reap the benefits of 5G, we must have a skilled workforce in place to deploy the infrastructure necessary to support this new technology.

Importantly, 5G technology will require not just traditional cell phone towers, but small antennas called small cells that can often be attached to existing infrastructure, like utility poles or buildings. Wireless providers will need to install roughly 800,000 small cells around the Nation to support this nationwide 5G network. And some estimates suggest we will need an additional 20,000 tower climbers alone for installation of this wireless infrastructure.

In addition, after installation, every one of these small cells will have to be monitored and maintained, which will require a substantial increase in the telecommunications workforce.

This amendment will help identify ways in which we can expand the number of workers enrolled in 5G training programs and identify ways to grow the telecommunications workforce well into the future.

This amendment received unanimous support by the Commerce Committee earlier this year, and I would encourage my colleagues here to do the same.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Montana.

Mr. TESTER. Mr. President, I want to associate myself with the words of JOHN THUNE: Listen to THUNE, vote yes.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT NO. 2162

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the amendment.

Mr. THUNE. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER) is necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM), the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE), and the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO).

The result was announced—yeas 95, nays 1, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 292 Leg.]

YEAS—95

Baldwin	Coons	Hawley
Barrasso	Cornyn	Heinrich
Bennet	Cortez Masto	Hickenlooper
Blackburn	Cotton	Hirono
Blumenthal	Cramer	Hoeven
Blunt	Crapo	Hyde-Smith
Boozman	Cruz	Johnson
Braun	Daines	Kaine
Brown	Duckworth	Kelly
Burr	Durbin	Kennedy
Cantwell	Ernst	King
Capito	Feinstein	Klobuchar
Cardin	Fischer	Lankford
Carper	Gillibrand	Leahy
Casey	Grassley	Lee
Cassidy	Hagerty	Lujan
Collins	Hassan	Lummis

Manchin	Risch	Sullivan
Markey	Romney	Tester
Marshall	Rosen	Thune
McConnell	Rounds	Tillis
Menendez	Sanders	Toomey
Merkley	Sasse	Tuberville
Moran	Schatz	Van Hollen
Murkowski	Schumer	Warner
Murphy	Scott (FL)	Warnock
Murray	Scott (SC)	Warren
Ossoff	Shaheen	Whitehouse
Padilla	Shelby	Wicker
Peters	Sinema	Wyden
Portman	Smith	Young
Reed	Stabenow	

NAYS—1

Paul

NOT VOTING—4

Booker	Inhofe
Graham	Rubio

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 95, the nays are 1.

Under the previous order requiring 60 votes for the adoption of this amendment, the amendment is agreed to.

The amendment (No. 2162) was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia.

Mr. KAINE. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. SMITH). Without objection, it is so ordered.

AMENDMENT NO. 2180 TO AMENDMENT NO. 2137

Mr. CARPER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the following amendment be called up to the substitute and be reported by number. No. 1, Barrasso, 2180, which deals with building energy codes; further, that the Senate vote in relation to the amendment at 7:40 p.m., with no amendments in order to the amendment prior to a vote in relation to the amendment, with 60 affirmative votes required for adoption, and 2 minutes of debate divided equally prior to the vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mrs. CAPITO. Madam President, I would just like to join my chairman and thank him again. This will be our third amendment of the night. I think it shows good progress for all of us.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the amendment by number.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Delaware [Mr. CARPER], for Mr. BARRASSO, proposes an amendment numbered 2180 to amendment No. 2137.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To limit the use of certain funds made available for grants to enable the sustained cost-effective implementation of updated building energy codes)

In section 309(e) of the Energy Conservation and Production Act (as added by section 40511(a)), strike the closing quotation marks and the following period and insert the following:

“(f) LIMITATION ON USE OF FUNDS.—None of the funds made available under subsection (e) may be used—

“(1) to encourage or facilitate the adoption of building codes that restrict or prohibit the direct use of natural gas in residential and commercial buildings for space heating, water heating, cooking, or other purposes; or

“(2) to compel the adoption of model building energy codes.”.

Mr. CARPER. Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

AMENDMENT NO. 2180

Mr. BARRASSO. Madam President, I come to the floor today to address the amendment on which we will be voting in the next 15 or 20 minutes. It is the Barrasso amendment to No. 2137. It has to do with building codes in the bill that is on the floor tonight for our discussion and debate, the bipartisan infrastructure bill.

There is money in this bill that is being debated today for building codes, and this amendment is quite simple. It is a consumer protection amendment, and it just says no money—no money in this bill—can be used to bar natural gas hookups to your home. You can't block commercial use, residential use, and new constructions. So no money in the bill can be used to restrict or prohibit the direct use of natural gas in residential and commercial buildings in support of it—space heating, water heating or cooking, and for other purposes. And you can't also use money to compel the adoption of modern building energy codes. Those are local decisions that are made.

Why I come to the floor to speak specifically about that is that people all around the country are very concerned about what is in this bill and how it is going to affect them at home and how they live and their pocketbooks. No matter where you are from, people are saying: How is this going to impact me?

People who are living under the times of this massive inflation that they are hitting—they are paying more for groceries, they are paying more for gasoline, and now they are looking at, if they come out with building codes that block natural gas hookups, what is that going to do to the cost of energy to heat their home, to cook, and all of those sorts of things?

And for people who are not necessarily tuned into this who may be Members of this body but who don't think about how so many of the decisions here impact hard-working American families, I come to a story that was in this morning's Wall Street Journal. The headline is “Natural-Gas Phaseouts Are Facing Resistance.” And there is a reason they are facing resistance. They are facing resistance because people do not want to have to pay more money for energy to heat

their homes, to cook, and all of those things.

And the article points out that Massachusetts is emerging as a key battleground in this U.S. fight over whether to phase out natural gas for home cooking and heating, with fears of unknown costs. That is what people are concerned about—unknown costs and unfamiliar technologies fueling much of the opposition as the country is being encouraged to go all electric.

So what we are seeing is that more towns around Boston are debating measures to block or limit the use of gas in new construction, and they talk about climate change as a reason for that. Well, builders and realtors will tell you that construction costs go up and the cost of heating and cooking go up if you are not allowed to use natural gas in the construction. As a matter of fact, a study by a subsidiary of the National Association of Home Builders, published this year, estimated that building all-electric homes in the colder climates of Denver, CO, the Rocky Mountain West, and Minneapolis—as part of their study, they say it may cost at least \$11,000 more to build those than it would if you could allow them to be built for the use of gas.

So they are saying: Wait a second. Before you drive up the cost of buying a new home, before you drive up the cost of cooking and heating your home, let's let people make some decisions for themselves. They don't need Washington telling us what we need to do and what we can do.

Major cities right now, including San Francisco, Seattle, Denver, and New York, have enacted or proposed measures to ban or discourage the use of natural gas in new homes and in buildings. This is 2 years after Berkeley, one of the most liberal bastions of the country, passed the first such prohibition in the United States.

And, as you can imagine, when these things are coming out of California, a State with the highest electricity costs in the country, a State with ongoing blackouts because of their lack of energy effectiveness and efficiency and all of the mandates related to energy and sky-high prices, the efforts have sparked a backlash—no surprise—prompting some States to make gas bans illegal.

So I am coming to the floor with this amendment to point out that, as we are working on bipartisan legislation and there is money in the bill for building codes, no money can be used to prohibit natural gas hookups to homes, commercial construction, residential, and new construction, because consumers have to have a say in this.

It shouldn't be government saying: We know better than you do. We will spend your money. We will make decisions about how you get to spend your hard-earned money.

And it is coming from the State of Wyoming where a significant production of natural gas is affordable, reliable, available, and people want to use

it. They want to use it because they know the value to them and their families and their way of life. They don't want Washington coming in and saying: No, you can't do it because we know better than you do.

And I hear a lot about that at home in Wyoming—people saying to Washington: You don't know better than we do. We don't need you telling us.

The bill doesn't say that it is going to tell them. We just want to make sure that by adopting this amendment, the building codes do not bar the use of natural gas hookups to your home.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

AMENDMENT NO. 2180

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Madam President, I rise to urge my colleagues to vote against this Barrasso amendment because there is nothing in the underlying provision that would in any way promote prohibiting natural gas, and that is what Senator BARRASSO is suggesting is in the bill.

Now, if it were such as Senator BARRASSO says, I don't think we would have received strong letters of support for this specific provision from both the National Association of Home Builders and the American Gas Association.

I have the letters right here. I would actually like to read from the Home Builders' letter.

The Home Builders support section 5101, which was the original section in the Energy bill as it passed the committee.

Cost-Effective codes implementation for efficiency and resiliency.

And this is the important point:

This section promotes technical assistance and funding for code adoption while maintaining the flexibility for state and local governments to deliver safe, energy efficient, and affordable housing.

Why would we want to get in the way of what States and communities are already doing?

I ask unanimous consent that both of these letters be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF

HOME BUILDERS,

Washington, DC, July 13, 2021.

Hon. JOSEPH MANCHIN,
Chairman, Senate Energy & Natural Resources
Committee, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

Hon. JOHN BARRASSO,
Ranking Member, Senate Energy & Natural
Resources Committee, U.S. Senate, Wash-
ington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN MANCHIN AND RANKING MEMBER BARRASSO, On behalf of more than 140,000 members of the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB), we write to express our strong support for the Energy Infrastructure Act. This legislation advances

efforts to increase energy efficiency and reduce greenhouse gas emissions without stringent energy code mandates that will increase housing prices for American home buyers.

NAHB strongly supports climate change programs that recognize and promote voluntary, above-code compliance for energy efficiency programs. There are several programs, certifications, and other options that are incorporated into this legislation that promote verifiable reductions in greenhouse gas emissions. Specifically, NAHB supports Section 5101, Cost-effective codes implementation for efficiency and resiliency. This section promotes technical assistance and funding for code adoption while maintaining the flexibility for state and local governments to deliver safe, energy efficient, and affordable housing.

We commend your leadership on this vital legislation and look forward to working as a partner with all levels of government to encourage energy efficiency.

Thank you for your consideration on this matter.

Sincerely,

JAMES W. TOBIN III.

AMERICAN GAS ASSOCIATION,
July 12, 2020.

Hon. JOE MANCHIN III,
Chairman, Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, Washington, DC.

Hon. JOHN BARRASSO,
Ranking Member, Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN MANCHIN AND RANKING MEMBER BARRASSO: On behalf of the American Gas Association (AGA), we appreciate your Committee's consideration of the legislative proposal to address energy infrastructure throughout the country—the Energy Infrastructure Act. AGA is committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions through smart innovation, new and modernized infrastructure, and advanced natural gas technologies that maintain reliable, resilient, and affordable energy service choices for consumers. With these principles in mind, we are pleased to support Subtitle B—Hydrogen Research and Development, Section 5002—Energy Efficiency Revolving Loan Fund Capitalization Grant Program, and Section 5101—Cost-Effective Codes Implementation for Efficiency and Resilience within the Energy Infrastructure Act.

AGA, founded in 1918, represents more than 200 local energy companies that deliver clean natural gas throughout the United States. Nearly 180 million Americans and 5.5 million businesses use natural gas in all fifty states utilize natural gas served by an infrastructure base that is unrivaled in the world.

The use of natural gas, in combination with energy efficiency and renewable gases—such as hydrogen—has contributed to U.S. energy-related carbon dioxide emissions declining to the lowest levels in three decades. Furthermore, methane emissions from natural gas utility distribution systems have declined 73 percent since 1990, even as natural gas utility companies added more than 760,000 miles of pipeline and approximately a customer every minute.

We appreciate the work your Committee is doing to advance legislation that would put in place fuel neutral approaches to addressing the country's energy infrastructure needs. The natural gas industry has a proven track record of reducing emissions through energy efficiency and innovation, and we look forward to continuing to work with you on these important issues.

Sincerely,

GEORGE LOWE.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. As many of my colleagues know, it is unprecedented to

get the American Gas Association, the National Association of Home Builders, and the energy efficiency advocates all in agreement, and that is the result of the extensive negotiations that went into this section of the bill that Senator BARRASSO would overturn.

Now, Energy Chairman MANCHIN wasn't able to get here to speak to this provision and this amendment, but he opposes it. And if he were here, he would say: "Let's not mess with a good thing."

This provision doesn't ban—it doesn't even touch natural gas. So I strongly support the bill as written and urge my colleagues to vote no on this amendment.

I yield the floor.

Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the vote that is scheduled begin immediately.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Seeing none, without objection, it is so ordered.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will now be 2 minutes of debate, equally divided, prior to a vote in relation to Barrasso amendment No. 2180.

Mr. BARRASSO. I yield back all time.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT NO. 2180

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the amendment.

Mr. BARRASSO. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER) and the Senator from Virginia (Mr. Kaine) are necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT), the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM), the Senator from Missouri (Mr. HAWLEY), the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE), and the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO).

The result was announced—yeas 45, nays 48, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 293 Leg.]

YEA—45

Barrasso
Blackburn
Boozman
Braun
Burr
Capito
Cassidy
Collins
Cornyn
Cotton
Cramer
Crapo
Cruz
Daines
Ernst

Fischer
Grassley
Hagerty
Hoeven
Hyde-Smith
Johnson
Kennedy
Lankford
Lee
Lummis
Marshall
McConnell
Moran
Murkowski
Paul

Portman
Risch
Romney
Rounds
Sasse
Scott (FL)
Scott (SC)
Shelby
Sullivan
Thune
Tillis
Toomey
Tuberville
Wicker
Young

NAYS—48

Baldwin
Bennet
Blumenthal

Brown
Cantwell
Cardin

Carper
Casey
Coons

Cortez Masto
Duckworth
Durbin
Feinstein
Gillibrand
Hassan
Heinrich
Hickenlooper
Hirono
Kelly
King
Klobuchar
Leahy

Luján
Manchin
Markey
Menendez
Merkley
Murphy
Murray
Ossoff
Padilla
Peters
Reed
Rosen
Sanders

Schatz
Schumer
Shaheen
Sinema
Smith
Stabenow
Tester
Van Hollen
Warner
Warnock
Warren
Whitehouse
Wyden

NOT VOTING—7

Blunt
Booker
Graham

Hawley
Inhofe
Kaine

Rubio

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 45, the nays are 48.

Under the previous order requiring 60 votes for the adoption of this amendment, the amendment is not agreed to.

The amendment (No. 2180) was rejected.

The Senator from Illinois.

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LUJÁN). Without objection, it is so ordered.

AMENDMENT NO. 2181 TO AMENDMENT NO. 2137

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the following amendment to the substitute be called up and reported by number: Lummis-Kelly No. 2181; further, that the Senate vote in relation to the amendment on Tuesday, August 3, at 11:45 a.m., with no amendments in order to the amendment prior to a vote in relation to the amendment, with 60 affirmative votes required for adoption and 2 minutes of debate equally divided prior to the vote.

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

The clerk will report the amendment by number.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from New York [Mr. SCHUMER], for Ms. LUMMIS, proposes an amendment numbered 2181 to amendment No. 2137.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To require the Secretary of Transportation to carry out a highway cost allocation study)

At the end of subtitle E of title I of division A, add the following:

SEC. 115. HIGHWAY COST ALLOCATION STUDY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 4 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary, in coordination with State departments of transportation, shall carry out a highway cost allocation study to determine the direct costs of highway use by various types of users.

(b) INCLUSIONS.—The study under subsection (a) shall include an examination of—

(1) the Federal costs occasioned in the design, construction, rehabilitation, and maintenance of Federal-aid highways by—

(A) the use of vehicles of different dimensions, weights, number of axles, and other specifications; and

(B) the frequency of those vehicles in the traffic stream;

(2) the safety-, emissions-, congestion-, and noise-related costs of highway use by various types of users, and other costs as determined by the Secretary; and

(3) the proportionate share of the costs described in paragraph (1) that are attributable to each class of highway users.

(c) REQUIREMENTS.—In carrying out the study under subsection (a), the Secretary shall—

(1) ensure that the study examines only direct costs of highway use;

(2) capture the various driving conditions in different geographic areas of the United States;

(3) to the maximum extent practicable, distinguish between costs directly occasioned by a highway user class and costs occasioned by all highway user classes; and

(4) compare the costs occasioned by various highway user classes with the user fee revenue contributed to the Highway Trust Fund by those highway user classes.

(d) REPORTS.—

(1) INTERIM REPORTS.—Not less frequently than annually during the period during which the Secretary is carrying out the study under subsection (a), the Secretary shall submit to Congress an interim report on the progress of the study.

(2) FINAL REPORT.—On completion of the study under subsection (a), the Secretary shall submit to Congress a final report on the results of the study, including the recommendations under subsection (e).

(e) RECOMMENDATIONS.—On completion of the study under subsection (a), the Secretary, in coordination with the Secretary of the Treasury, shall develop recommendations for a set of revenue options to fully cover the costs occasioned by highway users, including recommendations for—

(1) changes to existing revenue streams; and

(2) new revenue streams based on user fees.

TRIBUTE TO KEITH AND LINDA HAMILTON

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, at the 109th Wyoming State Fair, Senator LUMMIS and I will have the pleasure of introducing Keith and Linda Hamilton as 2021 inductees to the Wyoming Agriculture Hall of Fame.

Growing up as the fourth generation on the Hamilton Ranch, Keith's agricultural involvement holds deep roots in working to advance agricultural leadership and conserve natural resources important to the western lifestyle. In 1975, Keith joined the Wyoming Farm Bureau and began taking on leadership positions in 1981 as the Big Horn County Farm Bureau vice president. In 1988, Keith joined the Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation board of directors and represented Big Horn, Fremont, Hot Springs, Park, and Washakie Counties as the northwest district director until 2010.

In addition to serving the agricultural community through the Wyoming Farm Bureau, Keith has been very active in serving on public lands boards, wildlife working groups, and livestock organizations. Keith has given his time to the Big Horn Basin Sage Grouse Working Group, the Big Horn County Predator Management Board, and is the past chairman of the

Wyoming State Grazing Board. Through his work, the wildlife of Wyoming is left more abundant for future generations.

As Mark Anderson, current chairman of the Wyoming State Grazing Board observed, "Keith is currently our valued representative on the Wyoming Board of Directors to the National Public Lands Council and he is the type of person I would like to have as a neighbor."

The Hamilton Ranch and Keith would not be as successful as it is today were it not for his wife, Linda. Linda has a servant's heart and has dedicated her time and efforts to many events and organizations within the Hyattville community. She served as a founding member of Wyoming Agriculture in the Classroom as well as on their board of directors. She has also served on the board of directors for Northwest College alumni, the Hyattville Methodist Church, and the Wyoming Association of Conservation Districts. Linda held the important role as a spokesperson for conservation districts in both State government and the legislature. Linda leads with a selfless volunteerism, a community-based spirit, and an outstanding work ethic.

In addition to their involvement in civic activities, Keith and Linda Hamilton's love and dedication for agriculture show both in their dedication to organizations, as well as in the improvement of operations on their ranch. The Hamilton Ranch was recognized as the 1998 Environmental Stewardship Award winner, as well as a Wyoming Centennial Ranch in 2015. Both of these reflect the nature of Keith and Linda as leaders in agriculture.

The Hamiltons were one of four operations to initially enroll in the Wyoming Stewardship Program in 1982. This program opened the door for the Hamiltons to work closely with agencies such as Wyoming Game and Fish Department, Wyoming Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Forest Service, and Natural Resources Conservation Service on improving ranch operations. The Hamilton Ranch continues their involvement with these agencies today, leading the way for agricultural innovation and collaboration in Wyoming.

Keith and Linda are longtime members of the Wyoming Wool Growers Association, Wyoming Stock Growers Association, and past members of the Mountain States Lamb Co-op.

With the Hamilton family's unwavering commitment to our State, it is with great honor to induct them into the Wyoming Agriculture Hall of Fame. Keith and Linda Hamilton represent the best of Wyoming courage, optimism, and the Western Code. They have represented Wyoming's interests with dedication and distinction for many years. My wife, Bobbi, joins me in congratulating Keith and Linda Hamilton as 2021 inductees into the Wyoming Agriculture Hall of Fame.

TRIBUTE TO DR. JIM LOGAN

Ms. LUMMIS. Mr. President, today I am honored to recognize my good friend Dr. Jim Logan, who is being inducted into the Wyoming Agriculture Hall of Fame. Since the Wyoming Agriculture Hall of Fame was established in 1992, 67 agriculture leaders have been recognized for their substantial contributions to our great State. I speak for many when I say Dr. Logan is more than deserving of this distinguished honor. He built an outstanding career in Wyoming and has risen to the highest ranks of his profession. Beyond his professional success, he exemplifies what it means to be an outstanding Wyoming citizen.

Dr. Logan began his studies at the University of Wyoming in 1969 and continued his education at Colorado State University earning his doctor of veterinary medicine degree. Upon graduation, he returned home to Riverton, WY, and joined a veterinary medicine practice. He later opened his own practice, and for over 40 years, he graciously served his community. During that time, he established a strong reputation among Wyoming's farmers and ranchers. He quickly excelled and became a reputable leader in his profession.

After developing extensive knowledge and expertise in his field, he generously offered many years of service to the State of Wyoming. Dr. Logan served the Wyoming Livestock Board in many capacities, including as the State veterinarian. The agriculture community in Wyoming is grateful for Dr. Logan's contributions and his commitment to health and safety for an industry that makes up the very fabric of Wyoming culture.

As a member of various working groups and regulatory boards, he helped address some of the most pressing issues affecting our State. He was a central figure in the development of Wyoming Brucellosis Designated Surveillance Area regulations. With any decision, he constantly kept the best interest of Wyoming's livestock producers in mind. For this, we are thankful.

I would also like to mention that Dr. Logan has exceeded all expectations in what it means to be a leader in the community. His passion for agriculture has inspired the next generation of farmers and ranchers. Dr. Logan is a proud supporter of 4-H and FFA, serving as a mentor and instructor to young people with a heart for agriculture. He has also taken on many other leadership responsibilities on several State and national industry associations and committees, including the American Veterinary Medical Association, American Sheep Industry Association, and the Western States Livestock Health Association. Outside of the agriculture industry, he served as the chairman of the Riverton Memorial Hospital Board.