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

The clerk will report the bill by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 3055) to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide a dental insurance plan to veterans and survivors and dependents of veterans.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. BLUNT. I ask unanimous consent that the bill be read a third time and passed, and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

The bill (S. 3055) was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed, as follows:

S. 3055

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Department of Veterans Affairs Dental Insurance Reauthorization Act of 2016''.

SEC. 2. DENTAL INSURANCE PLAN FOR VETERANS AND SURVIVORS AND DEPENDENTS OF VETERANS.

(a) DENTAL INSURANCE PLAN.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter II of chapter 17 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by inserting after section 1712B the following new section:

''§ 1712C. Dental insurance plan for veterans and survivors and dependents of veterans

''(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall establish and administer a dental insurance plan for veterans and survivors and dependents of veterans described in subsection (b).

''(b) COVERED VETERANS AND SURVIVORS AND DEPENDENTS.—The veterans and survivors and dependents of veterans described in this subsection are as follows:

''(1) Any veteran who is enrolled in the system of annual patient enrollment under section 1705 of this title.

''(2) Any survivor or dependent of a veteran who is eligible for medical care under section 1781 of this title.

''(c) ADMINISTRATION.—The Secretary shall contract with a dental insurer to administer the dental insurance plan under this section.

''(d) BENEFITS.—The dental insurance plan under this section shall provide such benefits for dental care and treatment as the Secretary considers appropriate for the dental insurance plan, including diagnostic services, preventative services, endodontics and other restorative services, surgical services, and emergency services.

''(e) ENROLLMENT.—(1) Enrollment in the dental insurance plan under this section shall be voluntary.

''(2) Enrollment in the dental insurance plan shall be for such minimum period as the Secretary shall prescribe for purposes of this section.

''(f) PREMIUMS.—(1) Premiums for coverage under the dental insurance plan under this section shall be in such amount or amounts as the Secretary shall prescribe to cover all costs associated with carrying out this section.

''(2) The Secretary shall adjust the premiums payable under this section for coverage under the dental insurance plan on an annual basis. Each individual covered by the dental insurance plan at the time of such an adjustment shall be notified of the amount and effective date of such adjustment.

''(3) Each individual covered by the dental insurance plan shall pay the entire premium for coverage under the dental insurance plan, in addition to the full cost of any copayments.

''(g) VOLUNTARY DISENROLLMENT.—(1) With respect to enrollment in the dental insurance plan under this section, the Secretary shall—

''(A) permit the voluntary disenrollment of an individual in the dental insurance plan if the disenrollment occurs during the 30-day period beginning on the date of the enrollment of the individual in the dental insurance plan; and

''(B) permit the voluntary disenrollment of an individual in the dental insurance plan for such circumstances as the Secretary shall prescribe for purposes of this subsection, but only to the extent such disenrollment does not jeopardize the fiscal integrity of the dental insurance plan.

''(2) The circumstances prescribed under paragraph (1)(B) shall include the following:

''(A) If an individual enrolled in the dental insurance plan relocates to a location outside the jurisdiction of the dental insurance plan that prevents use of the benefits under the dental insurance plan.

''(B) If an individual enrolled in the dental insurance plan is prevented by a serious medical condition from being able to obtain benefits under the dental insurance plan.

''(C) Such other circumstances as the Secretary shall prescribe for purposes of this subsection.

''(3) The Secretary shall establish procedures for determinations on the permissibility of voluntary disenrollments under paragraph (1)(B). Such procedures shall ensure timely determinations on the permissibility of such disenrollments.

''(h) RELATIONSHIP TO DENTAL CARE PROVIDED BY SECRETARY.—Nothing in this section shall affect the responsibility of the Secretary to provide dental care under section 1712 of this title, and the participation of an individual in the dental insurance plan under this section shall not affect the entitlement of the individual to outpatient dental services and treatment, and related dental appliances, under such section 1712.

''(i) REGULATIONS.—The dental insurance plan under this section shall be administered under such regulations as the Secretary shall prescribe.

''(j) TERMINATION.—This section terminates on December 31, 2021.''.

(2) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 17 of such title is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 1712B the following new item:

''1712C. Dental insurance plan for veterans and survivors and dependents of veterans.''.

(b) CONFORMING REPEAL.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 510 of the Caregivers and Veterans Omnibus Health Services Act of 2010 (Public Law 111–163; 38 U.S.C. 1712 note) is repealed.

(2) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents for the Caregivers and Veterans Omnibus Health Services Act of 2010 is amended by striking the item relating to section 510.

FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2016—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PERDUE). The Senator from Vermont.

COLLEGE AFFORDABILITY

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, while the Senator from Missouri is still on the floor, I noted what my friend said about his being the first member of his family to get a college degree.

The Leahys came to Vermont in 1850. When my grandfather—who was a stone carver—died, my father was a teenager, and he had to go to work. I became the first LEAHY to get a college degree, and my sister was the second one. I have to think what the path might have been otherwise. There is one thing we all have to agree on: We have to make it easier for college to be affordable, with all kinds of plans and ideas. The kids have to be able to go to college. I was able to do that. I was able to go on to graduate school. It is so important to be able to compete today. I was touched by what my friend said, and I appreciate it.

COMPREHENSIVE ADDICTION AND RECOVERY BILL

Mr. President, we have kind of a good news/bad news situation today. The good news is that Congress is taking a step forward on how to respond to opioid addiction. By advancing the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, or CARA, we are leaving behind decades-old misconceptions about how to confront addiction.

For too long, Congress relied on punitive measures that only served to push addicts further underground and away from recovery. This legislation treats opioid addiction as an illness. It combats it as we would any other public health issue, through a commitment to evidence-based treatment and recovery programs. But the bad news is our commitment falls short.

The conference report promises critical programming, but then it does not pay the bill. It does not provide the resources necessary to support the programming. So we should know what we have here. We have a first step—an important first step but barely a first step. If we make a mistake and say: OK, we have done our job, then we have failed the countless communities across the country grappling with addiction. We are doing very little to stem this epidemic.

I am afraid my friends, the Republicans, have repeatedly blocked efforts to fund the programs authorized by CARA. When the legislation was first considered on the Senate floor, Republicans opposed Senator SHAHEEN's amendment that would have provided $600 million in new funding of emergency supplemental appropriations, which is actually a modest amount considering what is needed in this country.

Then we have the appropriations process in committee this year. Emergency funds to fight this addiction epidemic were denied. Senate Republicans kept assuring us that there was going to be a time and a place to include real funding. Well, last week's conference provided such an opportunity. I, along with other Democratic conferees, identified commonsense and bipartisan offsets that would enable us to dedicate almost $1 billion in new resources to put the programs in CARA to work. We told our Republican counterparts we

could not sign the conference report unless it included meaningful funding, but the Republicans voted against funding CARA so I did not sign the report. They also made a new promise. At the conference meeting, the Republicans promised to include $525 million in new funding to combat addiction through the appropriations process. I have to note that I hope Americans demand that Congress keep this promise and provide meaningful funding for CARA—not with poison pill offsets that would kill it but with real promises.

I will soon again join with Senators MURRAY, WYDEN, and SHAHEEN to introduce legislation to provide $920 million to fund CARA. It could be fully paid for. It could be paid for with offsets that received overwhelming bipartisan support. If we are really serious about combatting the opioid epidemic, there is no sense not to pass this, and there is no sense not to put our money where our mouths are, because, if we fund it, it can make an important difference. We can expand prevention efforts, expand access to treatment and recovery services, and authorize the critical public health programs to create and expand Medication Assisted Treatment, MAT, programs.

If CARA were funded, it could make an important difference in communities across the country. The bill lays the groundwork for expanding prevention efforts and access to treatment and recovery services. It removes arbitrary restrictions on prescribing Medication Assisted Treatment, which will allow nurse practitioners and physician assistants in Vermont to treat addiction just as they treat other illnesses. It authorizes a critical public health program I helped create to expand MAT programs. Some Vermonters tell me they are struggling with addiction and they have had to wait nearly 1 year to receive treatment. At the Chittenden Clinic in South Burlington, VT, several have died while waiting. Because we wouldn't fund it, several died. This story is not unique.

The bill also includes my provision to support our rural communities by increasing access to the overdose reversal drug naloxone. Rural locations have the highest death rates in the country from opioid poisoning, and getting this drug into more hands will save lives.

The Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act also recognizes that the overprescription of opioids is largely responsible for this epidemic, and the legislation includes a provision I strongly support to encourage the National Institutes of Health to intensify research on the effectiveness of opioids in treating chronic pain and to encourage the development of opioid-alternatives to manage chronic pain.

Two weeks ago, on a beautiful Vermont evening, a standing-room only crowd filled a conference room at the Green Mountain Technical and Career Center for a community meeting on opioid abuse. The event was organized by Lamoille County Sheriff Roger Marcoux. He is a former DEA agent who has seen the toll of heroin and opioid abuse and what it has done in the rural regions of my State.

Dr. Betsy Perez, a panelist and longtime practitioner at nearby Copley Hospital, surprised many in the crowd when she addressed the opioid issue from a personal rather than from a medical perspective. This doctor told the heart-wrenching story of her addicted daughter's journey.

Despite many efforts at treatment, her daughter repeatedly relapsed, eventually winding up homeless on the streets of Burlington. Her daughter is now 2 years into recovery and recently became a mother. The cost of her intensive residential treatment was high. It drained the doctor's retirement savings. But she would have it no other way. I wonder how much better off they might have been if we had prevention clinics in place.

I held a hearing in St. Albans, VT—again, standing room only. I remember a noted pediatrician who spoke about being with parents whom he did not identify. He said they were well off. He was telling them about the dangers of opioids and how teenagers can get addicted. They were shocked to hear this.

They said: Thank you for telling us about this. We will watch out for our daughter.

He said: I have been treating your daughter for 2 years. She is an addict.

You could hear a pin drop in that room. But she was getting treatment, and many are not so fortunate. Each day, throughout our country, 129 people die from drug overdoses. I suspect that almost every Vermonter knows someone who has been impacted by addiction. This is not the future we want for our children, our grandchildren, our communities. In Vermont, we know what it takes to get ahead of addiction. While I appreciate the attention Congress has given this issue, CARA will only work for Vermont and States across the country if Congress is willing to provide the funding that is necessary to fight this epidemic.

I was proud to help usher CARA through the Senate. I will support it today. But I am greatly disappointed that Congress has so far refused to treat this public health crisis as seriously as it did the swine flu or Ebola.

I would urge all Senators: Don't go just to formal meetings. Just stand outside your local grocery stores, as my wife, a registered nurse, and I often do. Just talk with people. Walk down the street, and talk with people. You are going to find what Vermonters know all too well: Lives are at stake here, and time is of the essence. It is time for Congress to act like it and fully fund CARA.

I know when Marcelle and I go home, we want to say that we are helping because we know some of these families personally. In a little State of only 600,000 people, you tend to know a lot of people. I have seen some of the finest families in our State devastated by this. I am sure it is the same in the Presiding Officer's State and every other State in this country. We have to represent the people from our States and help.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

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

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

Mr. FRANKEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 15 minutes.

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

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN POLICE AND COMMUNITIES OF COLOR

Mr. FRANKEN. Mr. President, as our Nation confronts what increasingly feels like a weakening of the bond between law enforcement and the communities they serve, I rise to urge all of my colleagues to examine the relationship between police and communities of color. One year ago, I joined the Democratic members of the Senate Judiciary Committee in urging our colleagues to convene hearings on this critical issue.

The Justice Department had recently made public the, frankly, shocking findings on its investigation into the Ferguson Police Department, which found that the city engaged in a pattern and practice of constitutional violations. But the Judiciary Committee, which has jurisdiction over matters relating to civil liberties and criminal proceedings, and entire subcommittees devoted exclusively to matters of crime and to the protection of constitutional rights held no hearings on the broader issue. No proposals were debated by the whole committee, no testimony heard.

We had already lost Eric Garner, Michael Brown, Tamir Rice, and Freddie Gray. And rather than honor our obligation to confront this problem head-on, rather than engage in difficult conversations about race and about persistent inequality, we allowed these problems to be met with silence.

It must be said that we owe a debt of gratitude to the brave officers who worked tirelessly to keep us safe from harm. Every day, they put their lives on the line to protect our safety and that of our families. But we are doing a disservice to the noble men and women of that profession and to the communities they serve by turning away from unpleasant facts and by refusing to talk about them.

That silence carries a terrible price. Last week, a 32-year-old man named Philando Castile was pulled over for driving with a broken taillight in Falcon Heights, MN. It was the 53rd time he had been pulled over in just a few short years. His girlfriend Diamond was beside him. Her 4-year-old daughter Dae'Anna was in the back seat. We

don't know precisely what happened as Philando spoke to the officer who approached the car. We don't know what the two men said to each other, but we know how that encounter ended. Philando died after suffering multiple gunshot wounds.

Philando's community—our community—in Minnesota is devastated. That community includes Philando's family, his loved ones, and his friends. It also includes the staff and the children in the elementary school where Philando worked; he knew them all by name. And it includes the parents of those children, many of whom began the morning after his death by explaining to their kids that Phil wouldn't be at school anymore.

The impact of Philando's death has been felt far beyond those who knew him. In Dallas, as people seeking justice for Philando and his family gathered in a peaceful protest, a deeply troubled man murdered five members of a police force shielding demonstrators from gunfire. And over the weekend, protests in St. Paul took a vicious turn as protesters pelted police with rocks and chunks of concrete.

Such violence does not honor the lives of those we have lost. It does not advance the cause of justice. Rather, violence makes it more difficult for our communities to begin the long and difficult healing process.

From the suburbs of St. Paul to downtown Dallas, our communities are in pain, and it is our responsibility as lawmakers to do something about it. We cannot take the steps necessary to confront this challenge if we fear acknowledging that it exists. We cannot solve this problem without coming together as a nation to address and dismantle the systemic racial injustices that lead to far too many of these deaths and to identify solutions. We cannot solve this problem if we run away from it.

But running from it is precisely what this body will do. In just a few short days, the Senate will adjourn for 7 weeks. During that time, our communities will continue to endure anguish, heartache, and pain. I hope every Senator uses this time to meet with people who have been touched by these events and to better understand the challenges that we face and they face. I urge them to join me in working to address them.

When asked about her son's death, Philando's mother said: ''All we want is justice.'' And she deserves nothing less.

ZIKA VIRUS FUNDING

Mr. President, I wish to turn to another important issue: the Zika virus outbreak, its devastating impact on families, and—I hate to say this—the Republican obstructionism that is preventing us from taking meaningful action to address this outbreak.

As you know, the Zika virus is transmitted to people primarily through the bite of an infected mosquito, but it can also be transmitted through sexual contact, through blood transfusions, or from mother to child. While it typically causes no symptoms or mild illness in adults, we now know that a Zika virus infection during pregnancy can cause microcephaly and other severe birth defects. In fact, the World Health Organization has declared this outbreak a public health emergency of international concern. In some countries, Zika virus transmission is so high that public health officials have asked women to delay their pregnancies.

While other countries are feeling the brunt of this outbreak, Zika is also affecting us here at home. So far, there have been over 1,100 people in the continental United States who have been affected by the Zika virus while traveling to endemic countries. This includes 320 who are currently pregnant. We are already seeing local transmission in U.S. territories, where 2,500 additional people have been infected, and these are just the confirmed cases. The actual number of those infected is likely to be much, much higher.

This is why over 140 days ago President Obama asked Congress for emergency funds to respond to the Zika virus outbreak. His request, drawing on the expertise of public health experts, sought funds for things such as mosquito control, vaccine and drug development, and diagnostics so that more people can get tested and receive their results faster.

After weeks of deliberation, the Senate eventually reached a bipartisan compromise. Although we didn't get all the money we need to fight the virus, we did get $1.1 billion. Democrats and Republicans in the Senate negotiated in good faith and got a bipartisan package that included important provisions to combat the Zika virus. That is why 68 Members of the U.S. Senate, including 22 Republicans, voted for the Senate bill.

Unfortunately, that bipartisan spirit has not prevailed. As it turned out, Republicans in the House of Representatives delayed and then derailed the funding request. Even though the Senate passed a bipartisan compromise, House Republicans, with support from Republican Senate negotiators, sent back a partisan package packed with ideological poison pill provisions. These included provisions that deliberately block funds from going to family planning clinics, take away money from the continuing fight against Ebola, and even erode provisions in the Clean Water Act.

Let me explain some of these provisions in more detail. The bill the House and Senate Republican negotiators sent back to us limits women's access to contraceptive services. Imagine that. At a time when many women have decided to delay their pregnancies out of fear of the Zika virus, my Republican colleagues are actively working to keep birth control out of reach. Such provisions disproportionately harm low-income women who turn to safety net clinics such as Planned Parenthood for birth control and for education on family planning.

Two weeks ago, one of my Republican colleagues addressed this issue on the floor of the Senate. Standing next to a photo of a baby girl with microcephaly, he argued that Democratic objections to the bill were ''fanciful and imagined.'' That is what he said—''fanciful and imagined.'' He dismissed the idea that Planned Parenthood was deliberately targeted in this legislation since it was not mentioned by name in the text. But it is actually that intention that is fanciful.

Because of the way the legislation is crafted, it excludes family planning clinics such as Planned Parenthood from receiving funds. This is particularly harmful in places like Puerto Rico, where infection rates are rising rapidly and high numbers of uninsured women need access to information about the virus, as well as effective birth control.

This kind of tactic is deeply counterproductive. To combat this virus, we must rely on the strength of our entire medical system and not sideline the country's most experienced family planning providers.

Second, Republicans have criticized Democrats for asking for more money, describing our vote against their bipartisan package as ''disgraceful.'' Let me describe what is disgraceful. This Republican bill, unlike any other recent emergency spending bill, actually takes money away from efforts to control Ebola outbreaks—which are still active in Africa—in order to pay for Zika.

I would like to remind my colleagues that a short time ago Ebola ravaged West Africa, infecting more than 28,000 people and killing over 11,000, making it the deadliest Ebola outbreak on record.

While research is under way, we do not yet have a vaccine against this virus. Ebola is still an active threat. In fact, since the 2014 outbreak, there have been several new clusters of Ebola virus due to the virus's persistence in survivors. Public health experts warn that this virus will return; the question is whether we will be ready. At this juncture it would be irresponsible to cut funding from Ebola research, surveillance, and public health infrastructure. The Republican strategy to fight the Zika virus would do just that.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The time of the Senator has expired.

Mr. FRANKEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent for an additional 1½ minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. FRANKEN. Thank you.

Finally—see, I was going to say ''finally'' anyway.

Finally, the bill even waives permitting requirements when it comes to applying pesticides near bodies of water. This clean water requirement was intended to protect people from toxic

substances, particularly pregnant women, children, and other vulnerable populations. But my colleagues are mischaracterizing our objection to this rider. In fact, one of my colleagues went to the Senate floor recently and accused the Democrats of being ''more focused on protecting the mosquito than they are protecting people.'' That is just absurd.

To sum up, my Democratic colleagues and I supported the Senate bill to fund the fight against a devastating disease, and Republicans decided to politicize this issue by sending back a conference report that was filled with partisan policy riders.

Every day that we don't act, this virus continues to spread. And, in the meantime, the Republican leader has not given any indications that he plans to change course. In fact, he said he plans to bring up the same exact partisan bill that was defeated last week.

The President has already threatened to veto this bill, so another vote would be useless.

I urge my Republican colleagues: Please, please stop playing partisan politics, and let's pass something meaningful to address this crisis.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas.

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, at the moment, we are considering the reauthorization of the Federal Aviation Administration, and I am disappointed by what we are about to do today, although at this point there appears to be no option. This extension fails to accomplish significant and important reforms in the aviation world, and it is something we were able to do, should have been able to do, and almost accomplished. As a result of our failure, I will oppose the reauthorization legislation we will vote on in just a few moments.

Three weeks ago, I came to the Senate floor to express my concern with what was happening, and my plea and request to our House colleagues to act on the FAA reauthorization bill as the Senate sent it to them—the FAA Reauthorization Act of 2016, which in April passed the Senate by the unusual vote of 95 votes in favor—broadly supported.

I serve on the Commerce Committee, and Chairman THUNE and Ranking Member NELSON worked hard with all of us on that committee to see that a wide variety of interests, a wide variety of opportunities were explored for us to make improvements in the world of aviation.

The way it works is, we have a piece of legislation that is in effect and will soon expire, and we are up against a deadline for that extension, but we knew that. In fact, we went to work early. The Senate Commerce Committee began hearings a long time ago—months ago. We worked hard to find consensus, and we did. Our product came to the Senate floor not just with a simple reauthorization of the Federal Aviation Administration but with items that were so important to this country's economy, to those who utilize general aviation, to communities that care about their local airports, and to those—in my case in Kansas—who care about how many jobs we have and can continue to have and how many more we can create as a result of the manufacturing of aircraft in this country. So we did what we were supposed to do in the Senate. We worked together and found solutions. We found compromises, and we passed legislation overwhelmingly.

Unfortunately, when it went to the House of Representatives, no action was taken in the House. As I said, the clock is ticking and the FAA will no longer continue to have legal authority to exist. Once again, as has happened in years gone by, we are left with a take-it-or-leave-it situation. We either take the House-passed extension or the FAA shuts down. There is no need for us to be in the position we are in today, and the extension we are going to vote on will be missing many important provisions included in the Senate-passed bill.

My perspective on this certainly is as a Kansan, but it matters no matter what State you live in. Kansas is an aviation State. General aviation is our State's largest industry, and our largest city is Wichita, which is appropriately known as the air capital of the world. Kansas aviation workers have supplied three out of every four general aviation aircraft since the Wright brothers' first flight at Kitty Hawk, and today some 42,000 Kansans make a living manufacturing, operating, and servicing the world's highest quality aircraft.

So what does the FAA reauthorization—the extension we are about to vote on—have to do with those jobs in Kansas? What does it have to do with jobs in this country? If we have a goal we ought to be working on together to achieve, it would be to create more opportunities for more Americans to have better jobs. We need—and we all know it—a strong manufacturing sector in this economy. Yet we will fail to take advantage of the opportunity to increase the chances of more manufacturing jobs, more general aviation jobs, more airplane manufacturing jobs in the United States—more jobs for Americans, better jobs for Americans, more secure jobs for Americans—because we aren't able to do today—the House was unwilling to include in the extension those things that increase the chances the aviation industry in our country can better compete with those in a global economy that are our competitors.

What the manufacturing side of aviation needs, what aviation manufacturers in Kansas need is the ability to compete in a global marketplace so the industry remains our country's No. 1 net exporter. This requires significant reforms at the FAA, particularly in their certification process and improvements in the regulatory environment.

These provisions that are so helpful were contained not just in the Senate-passed bill but also in the original House FAA bill that was approved by the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee earlier in the spring. So here we have a situation in which the House Transportation Committee, the Senate Commerce Committee—in fact, the full Senate—approves things that matter greatly to our country and, most importantly, to its workers, and yet today we come to the Senate with a relatively simple extension that ignores those important reforms and improvements.

These provisions that are not included in this extension would streamline aircraft certification, significantly improving efficiency, and better focus the FAA's valuable resources someplace else. These reforms would have had a positive impact upon our economy, on job security, and job creation. Both the House and Senate recognized the importance of this issue and advanced nearly identical certification reform language, but, as I said, for some reason that language no longer appears in this bill.

In addition to certification, there were lots of other issues we agreed upon. Among the members of our committee and among Members of the Senate, overwhelmingly popular bipartisan provisions were included in this bill originally in the Senate but are not included now in this simple extension, including things such as strengthening our Contract Tower Program, which is so important, particularly to rural communities.

Again, while I come from a State where we manufacture planes, I also represent a State in which general aviation, our pilots, and the airports which they utilize are important to communities across my State as we again try to compete in a global economy. The ability to bring a business customer to a small community that has a manufacturing plant is dependent upon airport and air services.

The language from section 1204 of the Senate-passed bill would have significantly reformed the cost-benefit eligibility rules for contract towers—again, this is a way we provide air safety for communities that are small and have small airports—strengthening the program and providing certainty once and for all for the 253 contract towers that handle nearly one-third of our tower operations nationwide. It was a good idea. It was broadly supported—supported in the House in the Transportation Committee, supported in the Senate in the Commerce Committee and on the Senate floor—but not included in today's simple extension.

Apparently, the reason these important reforms were excluded was so they could, at a later date, be used as a political bargaining chip. The House held these popular reforms hostage in an attempt to gain leverage and to later promote an effort to privatize our Nation's air traffic control system.

By putting on hold these long overdue, noncontroversial certification reforms, the Contract Tower Program, and others, Congress is damaging the business aviation industry and the people who work therein.

Not too long ago I spoke on this floor defending general aviation from the Obama administration's repeated attempts to end the accelerated depreciation schedule for general aviation aircraft. In my view, the proposal came as a clever political sound bite—the so-called corporate jet loophole—but in reality it would have meant thousands of jobs would be gone and the unemployment lines longer. The President's proposal would have accomplished nothing for the economy—not even a meaningful increase in tax revenues—and only would have hurt 1.2 million Americans who make their living building and servicing airplanes.

This makes today all the more disappointing. It is one thing for me to come to the floor and complain about an Obama administration proposal, but today I come to the Senate floor to complain about a Republican-controlled House that was unable to take advantage of an opportunity to pass a strong, long-term reauthorization bill and instead leaves us with a simple, short-term extension.

Of course, I believe fully that the leadership of my Commerce Committee—Chairman THUNE and Ranking Member NELSON—worked very hard at crafting this Senate-passed FAA bill. I am here in support of their efforts and express my disappointment that their efforts were not rewarded by the House of Representatives. I regret that because we did not have a willing partner in the House, we are left with a watered-down extension so we can further entertain other ideas at some other point in time while uncertainty continues.

While that uncertainty continues, the rest of the world can advance their efforts, particularly in airplane manufacturing, while we wait for improvements, efficiencies, and modernization in our own. While we wait for Congress to do its work, the rest of the world moves on, with the potential of taking away jobs from the manufacturing sector here in the United States.

Americans rightfully should expect, and do expect, leadership from their officials in Washington. At a time when this partisan dysfunction puts us in places in which we constantly find barriers in the legislative process, it sure seems to me to be a waste that this opportunity to pass meaningful bipartisan reforms and improvements that could have an immediate positive impact on our economy is foregone.

We have enough other problems around here in the way this place works. Here we had, in my view, a chance to grasp victory for the American people, for its workers, and for our economy. We failed to do it, and in the process and as a result of that failure, the ability of American manufacturers to create jobs is diminished and Kansans are more at risk for their futures as a result of our failure to do our jobs.

Mr. President, I thank the Chair for the opportunity to address my colleagues in the Senate, and I express my dissatisfaction and disappointment with the end product, recognizing the circumstance we now find ourselves in.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 5 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, I rise to talk about the FAA reauthorization we are going to be voting on, and I thank Senator MORAN for being here and talking about aviation in general and aviation manufacturing. He comes from a strong aviation manufacturing State, so I certainly support many of the things he said.

I certainly support making sure we continue to streamline our process, and it is one of the things left out of this legislation. So we need to do more on that effort. I certainly don't want people demonizing any aspect of aviation because they are all aviation jobs. People don't realize how many aviation jobs we have in the United States and the fact that we are still the top when it comes to aviation manufacturing jobs. So it shouldn't be a sector we relent on. We have a lot of work to do.

I would add to that list, though, the passage of the Export-Import Bank Board members so the Export-Import Bank can be functioning so we can actually approve aviation sales when we get them done, and this is for smaller aircraft or larger aircraft. It doesn't matter.

If we build the best product, we ought to be able to sell the best product around the globe. And we are still stuck on getting that nominee out of committee because of someone holding it up, and the fact that they are holding it up means we will go many more months before completing airplane sales.

I want to talk about some other provisions we are passing today. I am so proud to have worked with the chairman of the committee, whom I just saw pass here on the floor—I am sure he is going to speak in a moment—and the ranking member on very important aspects of aviation security.

First, we are doubling the number of terrorist-deterrent teams at U.S. airports and ground transportation. As we can see, these TSA teams are people who are very involved in making sure we handle security at our airports. This is a very important aspect of this legislation because, as we saw with the tragic events in Brussels and Istanbul, terrorists can attack us not just on airplanes or inside the security perimeter but outside security as well. So I think this legislation, thanks to Chairman THUNE and Ranking Member NELSON, is giving us the workforce we need to enhance the use of bomb-sniffing dogs, strengthen perimeter security, expand training, respond to active shooter attacks, and make sure the outer limits of our airports are secure.

I am proud that many of these provisions we passed out of the Commerce Committee are contained in this legislation and that it is doubling the number of these TSA VIPR teams that conduct controls and make sure our passengers are secure. These teams consist of a combination of law enforcement, inspectors, explosive specialists, and, as I mentioned, bomb-sniffing dogs.

What is so important about those dogs is that they are one of our best deterrents, picking up explosive material and tracking down people, and that is what we need to have at our airports. I again thank Chairman THUNE and Ranking Member NELSON for putting this in. Combining these law enforcement and bomb-detecting canine capabilities provides another layer of security at our airports. We have seen how the use of dogs helps us expedite our security lanes at SeaTac—now the busiest airport in the country as far as increase in volume—and we need to have more of these dogs outside on the perimeter as well. This will give us a visible deterrent and help us in protecting the much needed continuation of air transportation travel.

I also want to mention a couple of other things that are in this legislation—the checkpoint of the future and making sure we are streamlining our security checkpoints. We have been proud to work with the Pacific Northwest Lab in Richland, WA, where critical work is underway in detection technologies. And this legislation contains the extension of an important aviation safety item. There are 136 airports across the country that have automated weather equipment, but they need weather observers to make these around-the-clock observations. So at Spokane International Airport, this is a vital tool, and I was so glad to work with Senator MORAN and others in keeping this on.

Finally, we address in this extension a critical upcoming shortage of air traffic controllers by making improvements to the FAA's hiring process and creating a path forward for graduates like those at the Green River Community College in Washington State.

I thank Chairman THUNE and Ranking Member NELSON for these inclusions in their work. We obviously have much more work to do to maintain our aviation infrastructure, and I look forward to getting those done in the very near future.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Dakota.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 5 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President I rise today to discuss the security, safety, and other air travel benefits included in the bipartisan aviation reform agreement that was negotiated with the House of Representatives.

Last week, Senator BILL NELSON, the ranking member on the Senate Commerce Committee, and I reached accord on a way forward with House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Chairman BILL SHUSTER and Ranking Member PETER DEFAZIO. Our agreement presents an opportunity for the Senate to break the pattern of short-term extensions for the Federal Aviation Administration that have not included any meaningful reform.

The aviation bill the Senate passed by a vote of 95 to 3 in April was a larger and, granted, more comprehensive bill than the agreement that came out of our negotiations with the House. It contained provisions added by Members in the Commerce Committee and on the Senate floor that we remain committed to enacting.

Nevertheless, we knew that certain safety and security reforms just couldn't wait until next year for the process to restart. When we looked at the ISIS attacks in airports in Brussels and Istanbul, as well as the downing of a Russian jetliner leaving Egypt, we knew there were meaningful reforms that could help efforts to prevent these kinds of attacks here in America, and so we acted.

To address the threat of an ''insider'' working at an airport helping terrorists, the aviation reform agreement now before the Senate enhances requirements and vetting for airport workers with access to secure areas. It expands the use of random and physical inspection of airport workers in secured areas and requires a review of perimeter security.

Responding to ISIS's demonstrated interest in targeting unsecured areas of airports, this aviation reform bill includes provisions to enhance the security presence of units that can include canines and other personnel in prescreening airport areas and increases preparedness for active shooter incidents.

Because some international airports abroad operating nonstop flights to U.S. airports lack the security equipment and expertise of U.S. and other state-of-the-art airports, the bill authorizes TSA to donate unneeded security equipment to foreign airports with direct flights to the United States, permits increased cooperation between U.S. officials and partner nations, and requires a new assessment of foreign cargo security programs.

This bill, which the House passed earlier this week, recognizes that long TSA lines aren't only an inconvenient delay for passengers trying to catch flights, but they can lead to large crowds in unsecured airport areas that create a target for terrorists. To address these lines, the bill includes the TSA PreCheck Enhancement Act, which will help enroll more Americans in expedited security screening and reduce waits by vetting more passengers before they arrive to get them through checkpoints quickly.

Beyond question, safety and security needs drove the effort to finish this 14-month aviation reauthorization. The result, I can confidently say, ended up being the most significant airport security reform bill in over a decade. Our bipartisan, bicameral bill is good legislation that guards against the threat of terrorism, provides stability for the U.S. aviation system, and boosts safety and consumer protections for airline passengers.

As we prepare for a vote on this important bill, I urge my colleagues to support this bill that we carefully crafted over the past several months with our House counterparts that keeps the American people protected from terrorists, makes air travel safer and more secure, and addresses an issue of importance to all Americans.

Again, I thank the ranking member on our committee, Senator NELSON. Senators AYOTTE and CANTWELL, the chair and ranking member on the Aviation Subcommittee, were very involved in crafting this legislation. And, of course, there is the great work of our staffs, who put in countless hours to get us to where we are today, not only moving the original bill across the Senate floor back in April but also in negotiations with the House of Representatives to produce a result which I think we can all be proud of and which puts us on a path toward a safer travel opportunity for people in this country who use our airlines to get to their destinations.

Mr. President, I hope we will have a big vote, a bipartisan vote, in support of this bipartisan legislation.

I yield the floor.

Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COTTON). Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

VOTE ON MOTION TO CONCUR

The question is on agreeing to the motion to concur.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN), the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE), the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS), the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS), the Senator from Alabama (Mr. SESSIONS), the Senator from Alabama (Mr. SHELBY), and the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER).

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SCOTT). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 89, nays 4, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 127 Leg.]

YEAS—89

Alexander	Fischer	Murkowski
Ayotte	Flake	Murphy
Baldwin	Franken	Murray
Barrasso	Gardner	Nelson
Bennet	Gillibrand	Paul
Blumenthal	Graham	Perdue
Blunt	Grassley	Peters
Booker	Hatch	Portman
Boozman	Heinrich	Reed
Boxer	Heitkamp	Reid
Brown	Heller	Risch
Burr	Hirono	Rubio
Cantwell	Hoeven	Sanders
Capito	Isakson	Sasse
Cardin	Johnson	Schatz
Carper	Kaine	Schumer
Coats	King	Scott
Collins	Kirk	Shaheen
Coons	Klobuchar	Stabenow
Corker	Lankford	Sullivan
Cornyn	Leahy	Tester
Cotton	Lee	Thune
Crapo	Manchin	Tillis
Cruz	Markey	Udall
Daines	McCain	Vitter
Donnelly	McCaskill	Warner
Durbin	McConnell	Warren
Enzi	Menendez	Whitehouse
Ernst	Merkley	Wyden
Feinstein	Mikulski	

NAYS—4

Casey	Moran
Cassidy	Toomey

NOT VOTING—7

Cochran	Rounds	Wicker
Inhofe	Sessions	
Roberts	Shelby	

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that, notwithstanding the provisions of rule XXII, the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of Calendar No. 592; that there be 15 minutes of debate only on the nomination, equally divided in the usual form; that upon the use or yielding back of time, the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action, and the Senate then resume legislative session without any intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Carla D. Hayden, of Maryland, to be Librarian of Congress for a term of ten years.

Thereupon, the Senate proceeded to consider the nomination.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I rise in support of the nomination of Dr. Carla Hayden to be the head of the Library of Congress. President Obama nominated her on February 24, 2016, and the Rules Committee held a hearing on April 20, 2016.