

are in disrepair. What are State legislatures around the country doing? Raising the speed limit.

There are a number of places in America where the speed limit is 80 miles an hour. That means that this weekend—Memorial Day weekend—as American families load up their cars and head to the beach or the lake or to visit loved ones, half of the highways they travel on are in dire need of repair.

If that were not troubling enough, 64,000 American bridges are structurally deficient. As each day goes by, these roads and bridges get a little worse—one big pothole.

It is not just our roads and our bridges. Our Nation's infrastructure affects every means of travel. We are all distraught by last week's Amtrak train derailment in Pennsylvania. Eight people were killed. Hundreds were injured. It has been reported that the horrible derailment might have been prevented if speed control safeguards had been installed on this particular section of track.

What we have here in this Congress—my Republican friend, the senior Senator from Kentucky, is talking about the Senate running better than ever. I think not.

The story of our Nation's infrastructure woes is very clear. We have the technology. This great country has the resources. But my friends will not appropriate any money to do this. Stunningly, time and again, we have failed to fix the problems—one big pothole. Fifty percent of our roads are deficient, and 64,000 bridges are structurally deficient. Specifically, Republicans in Congress have refused to work with Democrats in making an adequate long-term investment in our country's service transportation.

What we have here time after time are short-term extensions of the highway bill. Before the Republicans hit town here, we used to do long-term highway bills—they have stood in the way of doing that—so that the Department of Transportation and leaders in all 50 States could plan ahead. That is why we did these long-term bills. The way it is now, a 2-month extension or a 6-month extension does not work. It is terribly inefficient and very, very expensive.

The highway trust fund runs out in about 8 or 10 weeks. The authorization for the Federal highway program expires later this month. Later this month, if we have not extended the highway bill, there could be no money spent on highways.

The fact that these programs are expiring is no secret. Our Republican colleagues have known about this deadline for months and months. Yet here we are at the end of May, and Republicans are no closer to crafting a long-term investment in our roads, bridges, and railways. They have not had a markup in the four committees of jurisdiction. In fact, Republicans are trying to do the opposite. They are going

to the extreme of gutting our already inadequate transportation.

Look at what happened with Amtrak. The House Republicans chose to cut Amtrak in the hours just after the derailment by a quarter of a billion dollars. Who could help but be astonished by this act of carelessness?

Former Pennsylvania Governor Ed Rendell, who knows quite a bit about Pennsylvania, speaking of the Republicans in Congress said: "Normally, after a tragedy, a pipeline bursts, a bridge collapses, everyone for a couple of weeks says 'we've really got to do something.' Here, less than 12 hours after seven people died"—of course, now it is eight—"these Republicans in Congress didn't even have the decency to table the vote."

They went right ahead and did it, cutting a quarter of a billion dollars from Amtrak.

In addition to what it does and does not do to highways, our bridges, our dams, is the fact that it stops job creation. Every billion dollars we spend on highway construction, infrastructure development, we create 47,500 high-paying jobs. Instead of slashing Federal funding or putting critical transportation infrastructure on the back burner, we should be crafting a long-term plan to boost our Nation's investment and infrastructure.

With precious little time before the Federal highway program expires, there is no hope for anything but a short-term authorization longer than a few months. We understand that. We are not happy about it, but that is the reality of the situation that the Republicans have forced us to be in.

The U.S. highway system is crucial to our Nation's economic well-being. It is how we move goods and services. It is central to American families who use our roads and bridges every day.

The American Society of Civil Engineers predicts that our economy will lose \$1 trillion without adequate infrastructure investment. That is almost 3.5 million jobs, and some say more than that.

Congress must invest in working families and businesses by addressing our Nation's transportation needs. I invite congressional Republicans to work with us in building bipartisan consensus to ensure a strong and robust investment in our Nation's infrastructure. What is being done as we speak is that they are trying to patch together a 2-month extension. A 2-month extension or a 6-month extension, I think, is the wrong way to go. It is not good for our country.

Would the Chair announce the business before the Senate today.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will be

in a period of morning business until 3 p.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The Senator from Utah.

HIGHWAY BILL

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I wish to take just a few minutes today to talk about the ongoing effort to maintain funding for the highway trust fund.

As we all know, while the highway trust fund currently has a large enough balance in terms of funding to last another 2 months, contracting authority expires at the end of May. Therefore, unless this Congress acts before we break for the Memorial Day recess, we will start seeing work stoppages on transportation projects around the country.

No one wants to see that. There is bipartisan agreement on that basic point. There is similar agreement on the desire for a long-term highway bill. Members of both parties are tired of kicking the can down the road and want to see a real, long-term fix. The problem is that the bipartisan agreement tends to end there.

The gold standard for a future, long-term highway bill has been set at 6 years. That is what everyone apparently wants to see happen, though few have offered workable solutions on how to pay for it.

According to CBO, a 6-year highway bill would cost a little more than \$90 billion. That is not chump change, even by Congress's standards. It takes real work and significant policy changes to raise that kind of money. One party cannot do it alone. It takes cooperation and compromise, something that, unfortunately, has been lacking around here for some time.

As the chairman of the committee with jurisdiction over the funding for highways, I am committed to finding a solution that gets us as far into the future as possible before we have to revisit the issue again. Toward that end, I have been working with Chairman RYAN of the House Ways and Means Committee and others on a path forward.

Our initial plan was to pull together enough funding to get us through the end of 2015. That would have cost roughly \$11 billion—with a "b"—not an insignificant number, by any means, but very doable under the circumstances.

We had roughly \$5 billion in agreed-upon tax compliance offsets from the previous highway episode late last year. Chairman RYAN and I thought it seemed reasonable to couple that with an equal amount in spending reductions and reforms, getting us very close to what we would need to get the country through the rest of the year on highways.

For a time, it appeared as though at least some of our colleagues on the other side were willing to work with us on this general framework. Unfortunately, that cooperation did not last. In fact, it never really began.

Last week, rather than even consider a path forward that includes spending reductions, our Democratic counterparts, at the urging of their leadership here in the Senate, effectively walked away from the negotiating table. As a result, it appears that the only immediate path forward is to extend contracting authority until the end of July, when the funding runs out, setting us up for another deadline and potential cliff in just a few short weeks.

Let me be clear, I do not fault Republican leaders in either Chamber for taking this route. It was, given the short timetable, the only option left after Democrats failed to engage in meeting us halfway with a balanced package of compliance revenue and spending reductions.

But make no mistake, we are going to be here again in 2 months, facing the same problem, because unless someone has \$90 billion just lying around, a long-term highway solution is not going to simply materialize between now and July. Don't get me wrong, fixing it in December was going to be difficult as well, but in the end it will likely take at least that long to find a solution that has a chance of passing through both Chambers.

The other side's strategy appears pretty transparent. They clearly have two goals in mind. First, they think that if they make Republicans vote on highway funding over and over again, we can be cajoled into accepting their preferred solution, which is a large tax hike. Second, they think that by maintaining a constant state of chaos and uncertainty, they can make the Republican-led Congress look bad or look ineffectual.

That first goal is pretty predictable. After all, a tax hike is their answer to pretty much every question that arises here. I hope I am wrong on the apparent second goal. If I am right, it is just sad. Apparently, after spending years in the majority trying to make sure the Senate never did anything productive, their goals have not changed now that they are in the minority.

But things are different now. These days, we are getting things done in the Senate, much to the consternation of some of my friends on the other side of the aisle. Despite this most recent shift on highway funding, I am confident we can work together to find a workable path forward. It just may take a few more votes to get us there.

Today, though I am frustrated, I am undeterred. I am committed to finding a long-term solution to our highway problems. I plan to keep working with my colleagues on finding a way to get us there, particularly Chairman INHOFE, whose committee deals with much of the highway policy, as well as those who serve on the Finance and Ways and Means Committees.

The highway bill should be a bipartisan effort. It used to be. Hopefully, after we get this latest episode behind us, it will be again.

PROTECTING STATES' RIGHTS TO PROMOTE AMERICAN ENERGY SECURITY ACT

Mr. HATCH. Finally, Mr. President, I would also like to briefly talk about legislation I introduced earlier this year, the Protecting States' Rights to Promote American Energy Security Act, which reinforces States' already effective regulatory practices relating to hydraulic fracturing.

This important piece of legislation recognizes States' demonstrated ability to properly address hydraulic fracturing and allows them to continue regulating on this issue. Importantly, this legislation does not prevent the Bureau of Land Management from promulgating baseline standards where none exist.

As background, for over 60 years, States have safely and successfully regulated hydraulic fracturing in a way that protects the environment. When I was in the oil business back in the early 1970s, hydraulic fracturing was being used then, although it has been brought clearly into a much more safe and responsible way since. Even the Obama administration has admitted there has never been an example of harm to human health or groundwater contamination caused by hydraulic fracturing under existing State regulations and oversight.

States should be able to continue to regulate hydraulic fracturing, and swift passage of this bill will afford needed certainty and future security for emerging U.S. energy development companies.

I urge my colleagues to support this important legislation.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. ERNST). Without objection, it is so ordered.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

ENSURING TAX EXEMPT ORGANIZATIONS THE RIGHT TO APPEAL ACT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of H.R. 1314, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 1314) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for a right to an administrative appeal relating to adverse determinations of tax-exempt status of certain organizations.

Pending:

Hatch amendment No. 1221, in the nature of a substitute.

Hatch (for Flake) amendment No. 1243 (to amendment No. 1221), to strike the extension of the trade adjustment assistance program.

Hatch (for Lankford) amendment No. 1237 (to amendment No. 1221), to establish consideration of the conditions relating to religious freedom of parties to trade negotiations as an overall negotiating objective of the United States.

Brown amendment No. 1242 (to amendment No. 1221), to restore funding for the trade adjustment assistance program to the level established by the Trade Adjustment Assistance Extension Act of 2011.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the time until 5:30 p.m. will be equally divided between the two managers or their designees.

The Senator from Utah.

Mr. HATCH. Thank you, Madam President.

Finally, at long last, the Senate has begun its debate on the Bipartisan Trade Priorities and Accountability Act of 2015, a bipartisan and bicameral bill to renew trade promotion authority or TPA. As one of the authors of this legislation, I am glad we have gotten to this point and look forward to a spirited and fulsome debate on the floor.

This legislation has been in the works for a long time. As we all know, the previous iteration of TPA expired in 2007. The original version was originally enacted in 2002. In other words, it has been 13 years since Congress seriously considered legislation to renew trade promotion authority. I think it is safe to say that at least for those who focus on trade policy, the debate and discussion surrounding what would go into the next TPA bill has been going on that entire time.

For me, while I have long been a supporter of free trade and TPA, the real work on this bill began in earnest in the spring of 2013. I worked for the better part of a year with former Chairman Max Baucus and Dave Camp on legislation to renew TPA for a 21st century economy. We introduced our bill—which, in many ways, formed the basis for the legislation we are debating now—in January of last year.

This year, when I became chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, I sought to work with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to make improvements to the bill in order to broaden its support. Most notably, I worked closely with my colleagues on the Finance Committee and with chairman PAUL RYAN of the House Ways and Means Committee to craft an improved TPA bill. Senator WYDEN and I work well together, and we were able to bring this bill to fruition. I think we were successful.

Indeed, we were able to build upon the efforts of last Congress to make important changes that will enhance Congress's role in crafting our trade policy and improve overall transparency and accountability. We introduced our bill on April 16, and on April 22, the Finance Committee reported