

there are certain types of Federal benefits. Our offices are working together with outside groups to coordinate that.

Thankfully, our community has come together to make sure these families have the financial support they need beyond that. There is an effort under way in Chattanooga now—and I hope people around the world will participate—to make sure that the financial support that is necessary to sustain these families in light of what happened occurs.

My friend and a great Tennessean—or at least we claim him as that because he lives in Chattanooga for part of the year—Peyton Manning, has lent his name to this effort. My sense is that we will see a generous outpouring to ensure that, at a base level, some of the financial needs of these families, if not all, will be dealt with in an appropriate way.

I will close by saying this. Our community has been shocked, as has the world. We have lost five outstanding people, and it has shaken their families.

I had the opportunity to meet briefly with the family of the fallen sailor, the last person who passed. He was riddled with bullets, and the Erlanger trauma squad worked with him for hours and hours and hours trying to save his life. Finally, after a tremendous fight, he lost his life—again, in the line of duty.

The needs of these families are great. While our community is praying, they will try to meet their needs in other ways.

How do we respond to this? LAMAR and I have both mentioned what comes out of this, and the fact is that I feel that our community is like none I have witnessed from the standpoint of its compassion to others. My sense is that the way our community is going to respond to this is much like what I would refer to in Genesis 12, where God said to the Jewish people that they were blessed to be a blessing. I think most people in our community, our State, and our Nation believe we have been incredibly blessed, and my sense is that in addition to responding to the specific needs that need to be dealt with both here in Washington and back home and certainly at the State level, our community is going to rise up and ensure that, because we have been blessed, we continue to be a blessing to others. That is my hope, and that is what I am seeing happen. I have never seen such an outpouring of compassion anywhere else in my life.

I am proud to represent Tennessee. I am proud that my hometown has responded in the way that it has, in spite of a deep mourning and grief that we have for these outstanding men who lost their lives in the line of duty.

Senator ALEXANDER and I will submit a resolution later today, and my sense is that the entire Senate will want to be a part of it.

With that, I will turn to my distinguished friend, a great colleague, and one of the greatest Senators our State has ever had, LAMAR ALEXANDER.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I thank Senator CORKER for his eloquent and obviously heartfelt comments. He mentioned the word that we have heard most often since last Thursday, when he and I first got word of this tragedy, and the word is “heartbroken.” We are heartbroken for the lives that were lost, heartbroken for the families that remain, and heartbroken for the community of Chattanooga.

We can see the deep emotion that Senator CORKER has expressed. As a resident and former mayor of Chattanooga, that community is very special to him.

On Friday at 5:30 p.m., in Mount Olivet Baptist Church, there was a memorial service that nearly 1,000 people attended. Senator CORKER, our Governor, the police chief, and others spoke.

I know most people in the country know about what happened that day. Most of them would have liked to have been there to do what they could in a time such as this. You never know quite what to say. Sometimes all you can do is just be there.

This is especially hard because these were young men—young men in the service of our country, young men whose lives were filled with happiness, young men who had the expectation of a long life for themselves, young men who were filled with duty and service.

They were living in a strong community. Faith and the sense of helping one another is strong Chattanooga faith. Chattanooga is a place of good neighbors. Chattanooga was recently named the best midsize city in America. Everything in Chattanooga seemed to be going in the right direction, and then this happened. So it is especially heartbreaking in the community of Chattanooga.

On Friday, I thought—while trying to think about what words I could add to the words that were being said—about the time in 1985 when 289 members of the 101st Airborne Division lost their lives in a plane crash in Newfoundland, and President Reagan came to Fort Campbell to meet with the families to talk about it.

I was Governor then, and I drove up to hear what he had to say. He spoke of those men and women—as these five were—as peacekeepers. They were there to protect lives, protect the peace, and to act as a force for stability and trust for our country.

President Reagan said of those 289 men and women, which can be equally said of these five men, that their work was the perfect expression of the best of the Judeo-Christian tradition. They were the ones of whom Christ spoke when he said: “Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called the children of God.”

President Reagan said of the 289 who lost their lives 30 years ago what could be said of these five this week and what a poet said of soldiers in another war:

They will never grow old; they will always be young. And we know one thing with every

bit of our thinking: They are now in the arms of God.

Chattanooga said last Friday the words “Chattanooga strong,” and they were repeated by Senator CORKER, the Governor, and most of the members of the community. People were standing up and supporting each other and the families who had been heartbroken by the loss of their loved ones.

I am enormously impressed with the people of Chattanooga and their current leaders: the mayor, the Governor, and their Senator, who is also their former mayor. I believe Chattanooga will be strong.

I think it is important, as we reflect and grieve here in the Senate with Chattanooga—not just with the families and the people who knew the five who passed—that we not only honor the five, but that we also honor the city and its response to this terrible tragedy.

I pledge to continue to work with Senator CORKER to do all that I can to help those five families and help create an environment that can keep Chattanooga strong.

I thank the Presiding Officer, and yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

THE HIGHWAY BILL

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, after literally months of discussion and a lot of cooperation from chairmen and ranking members and staffs and Members from both sides of the aisle, I am happy to announce that Senator BOXER and I have an agreement for a multiyear, bipartisan highway bill. We hope to be able to discuss this agreement at our conferences shortly. This is a 6-year highway authorization that will allow planning for important long-term projects around the country. The bill also provides 3 years—3 years—of guaranteed funding for the highway trust fund.

Senators from both parties know that a long-term highway bill is in the best interest of our country, so we will continue working together to get a good one passed. Thanks to the dedication of both Republican and Democratic Senators and their staffs, I am hopeful that we will.

I wish to thank some other people who have been involved in getting us to where we are. In particular, I thank Chairman JIM INHOFE, Chairman ORRIN HATCH, Chairman JOHN THUNE, and Chairman RICHARD SHELBY for their efforts to reach a bipartisan accomplishment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, if we have an agreement—and I am sure we do because I have great respect for Senator MCCONNELL, Senator BOXER, and, of course, Senator INHOFE. We have this issue, though: We haven’t seen the bill. There can be an agreement, but until we put an agreement in writing, things are a lot different.

We have a number of committees that need to look this over in addition to the EPW Committee on which Senator BOXER is the lead Democrat. We have the Commerce Committee that we have to deal with. We have the Finance Committee that we have to deal with. We have the Banking Committee that we have to deal with.

I want a highway bill. I have had the good fortune of being chairman of the EPW Committee twice. I worked on a number of long-term highway bills back in the good old days when we did that, and I hope we can have a long-term bill again. But we can't move forward on a bill until we have read it and seen it and studied it. That doesn't mean study it for several days, but we need to look at this document. I need to have a caucus after we have this document so we can look at it.

So I hope my friend the Republican leader will be patient and wait until we get something we can study, and I will have a caucus with my caucus and we will sit down and decide how we should move forward on this matter.

I repeat, I admire all of the hard work that has been done by everybody up to this point, but we have to make sure we move forward with this in the right direction. I understand all the issues probably more than most about all the time involved in a bill such as this. There are all kinds of potential ways to stall this, but we are not going to do that on our side. We are going to be as expeditious as we can once we have something that we can read and understand and, as I said, study so we can understand it.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, before my leader leaves the floor, I wish to thank him because he and Senator DURBIN, Senator SCHUMER, and the rest of the leadership team have been pushing hard for a bill. As my leader knows, I have been negotiating in good faith with the Republican team, headed by Leader MCCONNELL, for a long-term, robust bill.

I agree with Leader MCCONNELL that we have an agreement in principle. I also agree with my leader that we have to look at the details. So my work now turns to getting those agreements up on the Internet so people can read for themselves the various titles. It is my understanding that we will start to see that language momentarily. I know we are working hard with my Chairman INHOFE to make a couple of changes to EPW. But I have to say we have reached an agreement in principle on a 6-year bill with 3 years of funding, and the text will be printed shortly. I believe it is a breakthrough. The highway trust fund goes bust in 10 days.

This is what is happening across the country. It is unreal that in my State we would have this bridge collapse, I say to my friends, and now commerce can't move between California and Arizona because we have had this collapse on Interstate 10. How strange this

would be if this—thank God no one lost their life in this accident. But this bridge was rated structurally obsolete, so we knew it couldn't bear all the traffic. It is a huge amount of traffic. So this is my poster child for why I am working so hard on this.

I thank my Republican friends because they have really worked hard. Of course, I am looking at Bettina and Neil. I was talking to them at 11:30 last night, and in the leader's office we resolved the last couple of pressing issues, with his help. But we have to see the text. My friends on the other side want to see the text of the Iran agreement. This isn't exactly the same, but we do need to see the text. So I am urging everybody to get the text up as fast as possible so we can vote as soon as possible. This is a breakthrough, but we need to see the details.

I thank Leader MCCONNELL because this has been a difficult negotiation but I think one that is going to bear fruit in terms of millions of jobs and thousands of businesses in much better shape.

Thank you very much.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, the cloture vote we were originally going to have at 2:15 p.m. will be pushed back several hours to 4 p.m.

I will just add—in addition to the comments of the Senator from California—I wish to thank Senator INHOFE, who I think was in the Chamber.

Mr. INHOFE. Right here.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Nobody has been a stronger advocate for a multiyear highway bill than the Senator from Oklahoma. In spite of the rather dramatic philosophical differences which exist between the Senator from California and the Senator from Oklahoma, when it comes to a transportation bill, they have been a remarkable team over the years. So I thank my chairman as well for an extraordinary contribution to all of this.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I appreciate that very much. I wish to say that working in concert with Senator BOXER has been a pleasure. A lot of times philosophically in this room here we disagree with each other, but then when it gets down to what we are supposed to be doing here—I have to remind people quite often that if you read the Constitution about what we are supposed to be doing here—I am talking about Members of the U.S. Senate—we are supposed to be defending America and roads and bridges. That is it. So this is by far the most important matter before us right now, now that we have the Defense bill behind us, and I look forward to making this a reality.

The idea of a 6-year bill is very significant because without that we can't do the big projects. This morning on

the floor with charts I showed all the different big, large structures, such as the Spence Bridge between Kentucky and Ohio. These are bridges and projects that have to be done, and there has to be a long-term bill in order to do that. I also shared this morning an experience that I had on the I-35 bridge that we put in through—the last major bill we had was in 2005. We put those repairs in there. That was in Oklahoma City. We actually had the death of a lady who was driving her three children under a bridge with concrete falling off. So we have to repair America, and this is the first step toward that repair.

It is very important that we proceed to the bill. I would suggest to people that if you don't like it and if you plan to vote against it, that is fine, but bring it out here so we can discuss the merits, the demerits, and we can also start working on amendments. I would encourage any Member who is listening right now to bring amendments to the floor because when we proceed to the bill, I am going to be down here on the floor as long as we are in session, and I will be wanting to get to these amendments. It doesn't do any good to wait until the last minute and then show up and say "I have an amendment" on the day of passage of the bill. We will have deadlines. In order to get germane and nongermane amendments up for consideration, we have to have them down here, and if Members miss a deadline, then Members won't have that opportunity. So it is really up to the Members now to make sure that happens, but before we can get to that, the one thing that has to happen is we have to proceed to the bill. That has to be passed at 4 o'clock today.

I yield the floor.

ORDER FOR RECESS

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate stand in recess as under the previous order.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 2:15 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 12:28 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. PORTMAN).

Mrs. ERNST. 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.