

and there were a lot of people who were involved in that and I wish to take this opportunity to thank them.

We gave instructions to the Finance Committee and the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee that they were each to save \$1 billion. So Senator HATCH and his staff went to work on it, and Senator ALEXANDER and his staff went to work on it, and they accomplished that task in conjunction with the House. So I thank them for their effort.

I thank the Republican staff of the Senate Budget Committee, and especially my staff director, Eric Ueland; as well as my deputy staff director, Dan Kowalski; the parliamentarian, Tori Gorman; the senior budget analyst, Steve Robinson; the budget analysts, Greg D'Angelo and Tom Borck; the junior budget analyst, Kaitlin Vogt; the chief counsel, George Everly; the assistant counsel, Clint Brown; the director of regulatory review, Susan Eckerly; and the editor, Elizabeth Keys.

I also wish to thank the people on my personal staff who had to put some of their projects kind of secondary at times and then had to pitch in and help with the budget as well.

I also want to express my appreciation to the staff from Leader MCCONNELL's office. Leader MCCONNELL is a tremendous strategist and has opened the process for the Senate so that great things like the highway bill can be done, and that is done by allowing committees to do amendments, and then allowing the committee bill to come to the floor and have amendments from both sides of the aisle in an open process, and then to go to conference committee and have the conference committee do their work to make sure that the House and the Senate are together. Some of the chief people who worked on that are the chief of staff, Sharon Soderstrom; his policy advisor, Scott Raab; his budget and appropriations policy advisor, Jon Burks; and his policy director, Hazen Marshall. In addition, our floor and cloakroom staff has been very helpful, led by Laura Dove and Robert Duncan.

Senator CORNYN and his staff did a marvelous job of helping to find out what difficulties there were and what things needed to be corrected. Senator THUNE did a great job of lining up speakers, and Senator BARRASSO did a great job with his staff in lining up some of the messaging.

Thanks are due to the Senate Finance Committee, including the staff director, Chris Campbell; the chief health counsel and policy director, Jay Khosla; and the health policy advisor, Katie Simeon; the tax counsel, Preston Rutledge; and the health policy advisor, Becky Shipp.

I extend my gratitude to the staff of the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee, as well as Senator ALEXANDER, who has done a marvelous job there. I thank his staff director, David Cleary, his deputy staff director,

Lindsey Seidman, his senior policy adviser and health council, Liz Wroe, and his health policy director, Mary Sumpster Lapinski.

I also need to thank the former budget staff people who lent their expertise on this, particularly Bill Hoagland.

We are in a process that may help with some of the future accounting for projects and things and that is to do some budget reform. A lot of people have talked about budgeting reform and we have been doing some hearings on budget reform. We will be putting together a bill, and to make it a bipartisan bill it will have to go into effect in 2017. At that point nobody will know who will be in the majority, so we will all work to have a process that will be fair to both sides just in case we happen to be in the minority or the other side happens to be in the minority.

So we have a lot of people on both sides who have been working on that issue, and we will hold a number of hearings yet and hopefully come up with a process where we can get rid of old programs, eliminate duplication, and make the programs that we have be far better. Some of the people who have worked on that in the past have been Senator Domenici, who was the chairman of the committee; Senator Gregg, who was the chairman of the committee; and Senator PATTY MURRAY, who was the chairman of the Budget Committee. One of the early ones, Senator Phil Gramm, has donated some of his time to come and work with both sides to take a look at what some of the future economic problems are, and he is also one of the foremost economic predictors, so we can make sure all of those things will come together as we work on future budgets.

Of course, I would be grossly in error if I didn't mention the House chairman of the Budget Committee, TOM PRICE. He and I have been meeting at least once a week with our staffs and coordinating what is being done on both sides, both from a process standpoint, from a policy standpoint, from a bill standpoint, and from a budget standpoint. I think that paid off in what we are seeing tonight.

Last and particularly not least, I need to thank the Parliamentarians. I need to thank Elizabeth MacDonough, Leigh Hildebrand, Michael Beaver, Thomas Cuffie. These are some unsung heroes of the U.S. Senate who do a bipartisan—a nonpartisan job for us of kind of refereeing when asked, and when you are doing a reconciliation bill, you are forced to ask. I had no idea what the process was and the difficulty and the time that is involved, but all of that was spent by the Parliamentarians.

We are all familiar with the rule book that is in every one of these desks and about this thick. That is a small part of it. In their office, they have file cabinets full of precedents. If you are drafting a bill that has to meet the kind of rules and the tight constraints

that a reconciliation bill has, they have to meet with you on a regular basis and give their opinion and review all of these precedents to see if it can be put together the way we think it ought to be put together to be sure that when it comes to the floor, it can be voted on and when it is done, it actually is a bill that will be possible to send to the President's desk.

So I thank the Parliamentarians for presiding. I know the tremendous job they do of advising whoever sits in the Presiding Officer's chair, but this was a whole new level of instruction as I found out all of the things that they have to have as a part of their knowledge, and I really appreciate the effort they go to, the knowledge they already have, and the important role they play in this process.

I know I left out a lot of people, but to anybody who participated, I want to thank them for their efforts and hope that out of all of these budget processes, what we come up with is a better America.

I yield the floor, and I thank the chairman.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

MR. INHOFE. Mr. President, let me first of all thank the Senator from Wyoming. It is interesting that every time we are involved in something—it could be reconciliation, the budget or the highway bill—he is always in the center and he has always been the anchor that holds us all together, and we appreciate that so much.

I will recognize the Senator from Washington, Ms. CANTWELL.

TRANSPORTATION BILL

MS. CANTWELL. Mr. President, I rise tonight to thank my colleagues who worked so hard on this transportation package that we have just voted on. I thank Chairman INHOFE and Senator BOXER for their hard work, as well as Chairman THUNE and Senator NELSON from the commerce committee for their hard work.

The last thing I would have predicted at the beginning of this year is that Senator BOXER would have joined forces with Senator MCCONNELL to force through a transportation package that many of us probably thought wasn't even a reality. I would like to thank the Senator from California because I think there are times in everybody's career where you have to decide that you are going to stand up and push forward no matter how many arrows are shot in your back or no matter how many questions people ask. You have a vision of a path that you see and you realize that at the end, you think you can produce a package that will really be good for America.

That is what Senator BOXER has done. She has produced a package that will not only be a great legacy for an already great career but will be the very anecdote we need right now to an economy that is greatly challenged by a lack of infrastructure investment.

I say that because the Senator from California and I both represent West Coast States that see Asia as a great economic opportunity and that represent ports up and down the West Coast. We probably have the top one and two and three and four ports on the west coast as far as volume. The key thing that we know is that our own quadrennial review of energy products told us that we can't even move product because we compete so much for room on our rails, and battle congestion on our highways. So for the first time, because of this legislation, the United States of America will have a national multimodal freight policy, along with a national freight strategic plan to say that we have to identify the freight network that is most critical to moving product to the United States of America and through our ports, and that we should have a program to direct funding to those multimodal projects that are going to help get U.S.-made products outside of the United States and to the markets where they need to be delivered.

So again, I thank Senator THUNE and Senator NELSON for fighting for these provisions in the commerce committee bill that got merged into this package and all of the staff on both sides of the aisle in the commerce committee who helped on this and Senator BOXER and Senator INHOFE for including this.

I know that many times I ran into staff in the hall and they said: Yes, we know, freight can't wait. Which is kind of a moniker that we had come to talk about because freight really can't wait. If we are not shipping it in a timely fashion from North America, from the United States, I guarantee to my colleagues that products will be delivered to Asia or to Europe from someplace else and we will lose business.

So I think the U.S. Congress and the Senate tonight has understood that our infrastructure needs a shot in the arm to move freight and to establish this policy I know is going to pay dividends for us. So thank you very much for making sure that provision was in this legislation. It is a very key moment for us looking at the fact that we are an exporter and that we want our products to reach markets in a timely fashion.

I also want to thank the Secretary of Transportation because he gets this policy, and the national advisory committee that his predecessor established on freight will be very helpful for us in identifying the projects and using the resources that are in this legislation to move forward.

I also want to say how happy and grateful I am that the resolution of the Export-Import Bank debate is finally over tonight, and finally we have resolved the fact that the Bank will be reauthorized for 4 years. There are hundreds of millions of dollars of projects that need to be approved and they can hopefully start moving through the process.

I will point out that the Board needs nominees to fill the vacancies, and we

should get that done so we can finish this process. But the fact that we are making a commitment for 4 years to the strategy that, yes, we want to manufacture products and, yes, we want to build things and ship them to overseas markets—whether they are grain silos, whether they are airplanes, whether they are music stands, whether they are tractors—whatever they are, we want to build them and we want to reach developing countries and international markets, and we are going to make sure the credit agencies that assist bankers in finalizing those deals exist, and we are making that commitment for 4 years.

So if there is anybody who has arrows in their back over that, I also thank them for continuing to fight to make sure we got through this process. My colleagues know that both a majority of people in the House—a majority of Republicans—supported this idea and finally got their voices heard through a discharge petition, and the majority of the U.S. Senate supported this position.

So I hope people who have allowed this process to finally take place will understand how valuable the freight provision and the export bank provision is for us as a country to continue our export strategy.

Our strategy is to build great products and to sell them to a developing world. Ninety-five percent of consumers are outside of the United States, so let's sell products, but we have to fix our infrastructure to do it. We have to make sure that credit is available to do it, and we have to make sure we continue to move forward with the other policies that are going to help us with this strategy.

So, again, I want to say how grateful I am. I will tell my colleagues I don't think it is a perfect bill, but everybody here understands it is not a perfect bill. Again, I want to thank the Senator from California for her decision to take what is a challenging process and persevere on an investment strategy that—each and every one of us would have written a different one, but at least it got us to this goal of making needed investment in critical infrastructure at a time that our country needs to be able to move products and get things to customers around the globe, and this will very much help in that process.

Again, I thank the staff on both committees, on both sides of the aisle, and everybody who was involved in making these policies a reality.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I wish to address very briefly the comments made by one of the Senators earlier about how bad this bill is.

I think it is important for us to understand that it shows us how difficult a bill like this is because we are facing accusations, and it is the kind of thing

that people would want to believe, but it is just not true. We don't have the things that sound good. The Export-Import Bank, that is something I had to swallow. I have opposed the Export-Import Bank every opportunity I have had for the last 20 years.

Yet this is a huge bill. This is the largest bill in 17 years. The most important part of this to me is those who criticize it fail to realize that when we take an oath of office, we hold up our hand—every Senator does—to uphold the Constitution of the United States. It says in the Constitution, the only two things that we are mandated to do in article I section 8 is to defend America and roads and bridges.

Ever since 1956, when Eisenhower came and did the national bill, the National Highway System, it has been successful, but where we have dropped the ball is we have been failing to have the Transportation reauthorization bill. We take into consideration all of the things that we are supposed to do, and these are things that we are supposed to do in accordance with the Constitution.

It is easy for me to say this because I have been ranked the most conservative Member many times and probably more than anyone else, but I recognize that we do have this responsibility.

Having said that, let me just say that I agree with the comments that were made by the majority leader and by Senator BOXER. She and I have disagreed more than we have agreed on things, but we have gone through a couple of these bills together and people look at us and think, if both of them want to do this, there must be something good about them.

So I have enjoyed working with Senator BOXER. It has been my honor to do it. We have actually shocked a lot of people with how well we get along. That is not going to happen after this bill, but it did before.

So let me just say this. I wish to thank some people. I appreciate the fact that the Senator from Wyoming recognizes his staff. I look around here and I see these two guys. They were up more nights all night long than they were sleeping all night long, and this is for a long period of time. We have been working on this for a long period of time. It is the result of months and months of really hard work.

In particular I want to thank our EPW team of Alex Herrgott, who was trying to drive this thing, and Shant Boyajian, one who does maybe the hardest part, the actual road part; he is the expert that pulled that through. We also had Chaya Koffman, Susan Bodine, Jennie Wright, Andrew Neely, Donelle Harder, Daisy Letendre, and Kristina Baum.

And Senator BOXER's team: David Napoliello, whom I really enjoyed working with. This is funny. I could talk to David just as I talk to one of our people here. We all have the same concerns, and so it makes it easier. I

also thank Andrew Dohrman and Jason Albritton. I would include so many others, but I see that Senator BOXER is still here, and I would like to just conclude right now. I know Senator BOXER wants to recognize some of the people that worked so hard in her shop, and we worked with a lot of people.

I will yield to Senator BOXER.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I am so relieved we voted on a 5-year, fully-funded surface transportation bill that increases funding for our highway and transit programs. This is a monumental accomplishment for us all. The Environment and Public Works Committee has led the way to achieving the longest surface transportation bill that this country has seen in 17 years, which is essential for jobs, for our safety, and for our economic standing in the world.

This bill, which passed the House by a vote of 359 to 65, will provide the certainty that our States and local governments need to plan and construct improvements to the Nation's surface transportation system. It will support millions of jobs and thousands of businesses. Our bill has the support of a broad coalition of labor, business, and government organizations, including the AFL-CIO, Transportation Trades Department of the AFL-CIO, U.S. Chamber of Commerce, Americans for Transportation Mobility Coalition, Teamsters, Transportation Construction Coalition, American Road and Transportation Builders Association, National Association of Counties, U.S. Conference of Mayors, National Conference of State Legislatures, National Governors Association, National Association of Manufacturers, American Trucking Associations, Highway Materials Group, Associated General Contractors, American Farm Bureau Federation, American Traffic Safety Services Association, Transport Workers Union, American Society of Civil Engineers, International Union of Operating Engineers, Amalgamated Transit Union, United Steelworkers, Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, Coalition for America's Gateways and Trade Corridors, and American Association of Port Authorities.

The FAST Act is a comprehensive bill that, among other things, modernizes federal highway and transit programs, motor carrier and vehicle safety programs, and includes a passenger rail authorization. We should also not forget that it reauthorizes the Export-Import Bank, which is so important for jobs and our economic competitiveness.

It was a mammoth task to put this bill together and it has been a roller coaster ride from day one. I am pleased that this entire process was jump-started when my dear friend JIM INHOFE, who has been my partner on many infrastructure issues, worked with me to pass a highway bill out of the EPW Committee on June 24 by a unanimous 20-0 vote. I truly believe

that it was our overwhelming bipartisan vote that set the stage and built momentum for this bill to begin moving through the Senate.

I also want to thank Chairman SHUSTER and Congressman DEFAZIO in the House. They led a strong bipartisan effort in the House of Representatives which allowed us to go to conference with the wind at our back, and while it was never an easy negotiation and neither side got everything that they wanted, I think we are all pleased with the outcome. I want to thank all the members of the conference committee, with a special thanks to Senators DURBIN and NELSON, who are strong supporters of the conference report.

Let me highlight a few things in this bill that I am so proud of:

The bill creates and significantly funds two new programs: No. 1, the National Highway Freight Program, which will improve goods movement; and No. 2, the Nationally Significant Freight and Highway Projects Program, a competitive grants program to support major projects.

It provides \$199 million to help commuter railroads install positive train control. It includes the Raechel and Jaqueline Houck Safe Rental Car Act, to protect consumers from leasing unsafe recalled rental vehicles. This cause has been incredibly important to me. I have worked tirelessly to get this safety provision into law. It will save lives in the future and is an example of the positive things we can do to prevent families from suffering from tragedies resulting from defective rental cars in the future.

I have been working for years to pass a long-term transportation bill, because our Nation's aging infrastructure needs robust investment to keep us competitive in the global marketplace. Our country has over 61,000 structurally deficient bridges and 50 percent of our Nation's roads are in less than good condition. More than 30,000 people die from traffic accidents each year.

The passage of MAP-21, for which I chaired the conference committee in 2012, provided 2 years of certainty and made key innovations for transportation.

Now, the FAST Act, which increases highway and transit funding, will enable our State and local governments to make new investments to improve our roads, bridges, and transit systems, which will improve safety, increase mobility, and keep goods moving efficiently. Improving our transportation infrastructure should not be a partisan issue, and I thank Leader MCCONNELL and Senator INHOFE for working closely with me to do the right thing for our country.

This entire process has been about trust, teamwork, and persistence, and I couldn't be more proud of what we have accomplished.

I would like to thank all of the staff that played an important role in this bill. As I have said, getting to this point has been a process that would

make the workings of a sausage factory look appealing in comparison.

Mr. President, I know it is late, and I know we are all exhausted, but you have to mark a moment. I think this bill was such a monumental effort and the staffs that we are mentioning—Senator INHOFE is right—they were working constantly. The reason I know is that I called them constantly.

Senator INHOFE is right again. I called my staff; I called his staff; I called Senator THUNE's staff. I called everybody's staff. Right? I drove them crazy.

One time my little granddaughter was there, and I was getting into a bit of an altercation with a Member from the House, and I whispered to my granddaughter: Tell him to help your grandmother.

She got on the phone and said: Please help my grandmother. She had no idea.

The gentleman on the other end said: Oh, boy, you are tough. OK. We got through that night all right.

I am going to also thank the House family who helped us write the Safe Rental Car Act.

In closing, I am going to read these names on my team: Bettina Poirier, David Napoliello, Andrew Dohrman, Tyler Rushforth, Jason Albritton, Ted Illston, Mary Kerr, Kate Gilman, Colin MacCarthy, and Kathryn Bacher.

From Senator INHOFE's team, I have to mention them again: Alex Hergott, Ryan Jackson, Shant Boyajian, Susan Bodine, Andrew Neely, and Chaya Koffman.

For Leader MCCONNELL: Neil Chatterjee, Hazen Marshall, and many others.

For the Banking Committee staff, I want to thank Mark Powden, Shannon Hines, Jennifer Deci, and Homer Carlisle.

For Senator NELSON: Kim Lipsky, Devon Barnhart, Matt Kelly, and Brandon Kaufman.

For Senator THUNE: Dave Schweitert, Adrian Arnakis, Allison Cullen, and Patrick Fuchs.

We built trust, we worked together, and we forged real friendships. I will never forget this as long as I live. I am grateful to everyone.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

MORNING BUSINESS

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

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

REMEMBERING GOVERNOR OLENE WALKER

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I wish to pay tribute today to Governor Olene Walker, a woman beloved in my home State of Utah and regarded across the