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House of Representatives

REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF H.R. 5957

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to be removed as a cosponsor of H.R. 5957. The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Louisiana?

There was no objection.

EXTENDING DEADLINE FOR PROMULGATION OF REGULATIONS UNDER TRIBAL TRANSPORTATION SELF-GOVERNANCE PROGRAM

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 6414) to amend title 23, United States Code, to extend the deadline for promulgation of regulations under the tribal transportation self-governance program.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 6414

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

SECTION 1. EXTENSION OF DEADLINE FOR PROMULGATION OF REGULATIONS UNDER TRIBAL TRANSPORTATION SELF-GOVERNANCE PROGRAM.

Section 207(n)(1) of title 23, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (B) by striking “21 months” and inserting “42 months”; and

(2) in subparagraph (C) by striking “30 months” and inserting “48 months”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Alaska (Mr. YOUNG) and the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Alaska.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 6414.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Alaska?

There was no objection.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 6414.

I thank Chairman SHUSTER and Ranking Member DEFAZIO for including the Tribal Transportation Self-Governance Program in the FAST Act.

The FAST Act requires the Department of Transportation to use a negotiated rulemaking process to establish the regulations to implement the program. It also set deadlines for the issuance of the regulations.

H.R. 6414 would extend these deadlines. This bill would ensure that there is an opportunity for a true negotiated rulemaking process that is not one-sided and that respects Tribal self-determination.

Without this extension, I am concerned that the Department will move forward with implementing the program in a way that is not helpful to the Tribes of America. This would undermine the intent of the previous FAST Act and would lead to a lack of Tribal participation in the program.

I thank the Sitka Tribe of Alaska for their leadership and work on this program and issue, and I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 6414.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, if you look at how transportation funds are administered to the Tribes, first off, it is a pathetic and inadequate amount of money, given the infrastructure problems that the Tribes have. But then, that is true of infrastructure, writ large, across the United States of America.

Secondly, we think it was 1860 or 1870, the Tribes do not directly receive

these funds. There are various Federal agencies involved, and sometimes State agencies involved, in the disbursement of those funds and the approval of the projects under those funds.

□ 1430

This legislation was part of the FAST Act, which would give Tribal self-governance. They would be able to administer their own funds without anybody taking off administrative costs, without bureaucratic delay, and set their own priorities on their own lands. I sponsored this into the FAST Act. It was unanimously accepted at the time.

Now, we thought, when we passed the FAST Act that 3 years would be long enough for the Department of Transportation to consult with the Tribes. We set up a committee to come to consensus on the rules for self-governance. Well, unfortunately, it was slowed down because of the Presidential election. After the Presidential election, this committee did not meet for the entire year of 2017. And then, this year, essentially, DOT had some meetings, but then presented sort of a take-it-or-leave-it to the Tribes, which the Tribes find unacceptable.

Now, unfortunately, the Tribes can't prolong the negotiations unless we change the law, because the law set a deadline of December 2018. And because of the way that bureaucratic rule-making process works, DOT would have to put out their rule in August while we are out of town and without having reached any consensus or having had any meaningful conversation with the Tribes under the rules for which they should be able to administer their own funds for their own projects.

So this bill is quite simple. It extends the deadline so that DOT won't rush out a rule that is opposed by the Tribes, which, obviously, destroys the entire intent of this legislation. This

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

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