the objective that many of us came here to achieve: to finally bring an end to higher taxes in Washington and begin, finally, to roll back some of those taxes on the American people.

In recent years, the percentage of the Nation's income, our gross domestic product, consumed by Washington in the form of taxes has gone up and up and up. Indeed, today the percentage is virtually as high as it has ever been in the history of this country—as high as it was during World War II, as high as during Vietnam, as high as during the Depression, and as high as it has been during any of the sort of crises that you might expect to produce record levels of taxation. Today, in the absence of such crises, we nonetheless have had a tax rate reach 21 percent above the Nation's income.

So, Mr. President, the Republican efforts to reduce the tax burden are timely, they are needed, and they are on target. As the Senator from Texas just indicated, whether it is the spousal IRA or the family tax credit of $500 per child or the growth incentives to create jobs and opportunities, such as reducing the capital gains tax rate, the Republican tax plan that was passed in this Chamber by a 80–18 vote addresses the concerns of America's taxpayers in a targeted way that will produce both a chance for working families to keep more of what they earn and be able to do more for themselves, on the one hand, and an opportunity for those who create jobs and opportunities to create more such jobs, higher paying jobs, and more opportunities as we move into the next century.

So for all of those reasons, we are optimistic that our 3-year-long effort is about to pay dividends and that, by the end of this week, with a little bit more effort, we can bring this tax cut to the American people.

To all of those who have been in the leadership of this effort, I offer my thanks because, a few years ago, I don't think anybody in my constituency in Michigan would have expected they would see their taxes go down. This week, we have the best chance in decades—literally, 15 years—to see that occur. So I want to thank and congratulate the leaders on our side who have kept the pressure on. I hope that, by the end of the week, we will achieve our goals, and I hope we will go one step further and prevent any extraneous revenues generated by these tax cuts from being used for anything but more tax cuts or to reduce the national deficit.

We just saw, as the budget negotiations began, that the revenues to the Federal Government were exceeding that which had been projected by the budgeteers in recent years. We were bringing in over $225 billion beyond what had been projected just a few months ago. Well, I think the same is going to happen as a result of the tax cuts included in this budget resolution and in the tax bill we pass.

Mr. President, I think it is imperative that any additional revenues raised beyond that which we expect here in Washington ought to go back to the American people, either in the form of reducing the deficit or more tax cuts for the working families. If we do that, then we can make this tax bill extra special, Mr. President, by truly making it a long-term tax reduction plan for the American people.

Mr. President, I thank the Chair and yield the floor.

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, is there any time remaining on our hour of control?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All of the Senator's time has expired.

Mr. COVERDELL. In that case, Mr. President, I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SHELBY. 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. SHELBY. What is the pending business?

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 1998.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the hour of 5 p.m. having come and gone, the Senate will now proceed to the consideration of S. 1048, which the clerk will please report.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1048) making appropriations for the Department of Transportation and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1998, and for other purposes.

The Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. SHELBY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the following list of individuals be given full floor privileges during the consideration of S. 1048: Wally Burnett, Joyce Rose, Reid Cavnar, George McDonald, Kathy Casey, Peter Rogoff, Michael Brennan, Liz O'Donoghue.

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

Mr. SHELBY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the following list also be given floor privileges during consideration of S. 1048: Tom Young, Alan Brown, Carole Geagley, and Mitch Warren.

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

Mr. SHELBY. Mr. President, I am pleased this evening to present the fiscal year 1998 Department of Transportation and related agencies appropriations bill. The subcommittee's allocation was $12.157 billion in nondefense discretionary budget authority, and $36.893 billion in nondefense discretionary outlays.

The bill I am presenting today, along with my colleague from New Jersey, Senator LAUTENBERG, is within those allocations and is consistent with our determination to achieve a balanced budget. This bill will also contribute to a safer and more efficient transportation system in this country and therefore contribute to economic growth and a better quality of life for all Americans.

This bill provides $30.1 billion for investment in infrastructure that the public uses, that is, highways, transit, airports, and railroads. That represents an 8 percent increase over the administration's request.

The bill includes a Federal-aid highway obligation limitation of $21.8 billion for investment in our Nation's highways. This is a record high level. And $1.63 billion above the President's amended budget request. The actual distribution of that obligation authority among the States will depend on reauthorization of ISTEA, also known as the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991, which has provided authorization of our Federal surface transportation programs for the past 6 years and which, as the Presiding Officer knows, expires at the end of this fiscal year.

This increase of almost $3 billion over the obligation limitation in place for this year will almost certainly mean more Federal highway spending for each of our States. I want to illustrate for Senators what this increase might mean for them even though I must caution my colleagues this evening that no one can predict now how highway funds will be distributed among the States next year.

I ask unanimous consent that this table comparing State-by-State distribution of highway obligation authority in the current fiscal year to the distribution of the highway obligation authority in our bill for the fiscal year 1998, assuming the same apportionments of contract authority among the States as this year, be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the list was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION—ACTUAL FY 1997 OBLIGATION LIMITATION & ESTIMATED FY 1998 OBLIGATION LIMITATION

[In thousands of dollars]

State	Total FY 1997 obligation limitation [1]	Est. FY 1998 limitation based on FY 1997 actual apportionments	Delta
Alabama	342,557	396,091	53,535
Alaska	195,784	231,059	35,276
Arizona	244,117	285,850	41,733
Arkansas	205,115	244,592	39,477
California	1,513,221	1,801,124	287,903
Colorado	192,727	229,249	36,522
Connecticut	342,128	407,185	65,056
Delaware	74,967	89,241	14,274
Dist. of Col.	77,307	93,231	15,924
Florida	757,510	869,277	111,767
Georgia	560,549	620,305	59,756