

S. 1087. A bill to provide for the modernization of port and rail access in northern New England, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. ROTH:

S. 1088. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on ACM; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. SPECTER (for himself, Mr. FORD, Mr. SANTORUM, Mr. HARKIN, Mr. INOUE, Mr. INHOFE, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. ROCKEFELLER, Mr. BRYAN, and Mr. DURBIN):

S. 1089. A bill to terminate the effectiveness of certain amendments to the foreign repair station rules of the Federal Aviation Administration, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. BURNS (for himself, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. MCCONNELL, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. BROWNBACK, Mr. THURMOND, Mr. HELMS, Mr. DASCHLE, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. HATCH, Mr. INHOFE, and Mr. CONRAD):

S. 1090. A bill to specify that States may waive requirements relating to commercial drivers' licenses under chapter 313 of title 49, United States Code, with respect to certain farm vehicles, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. BINGAMAN (for himself and Mr. DOMENICI):

S. 1091. A bill to amend title 23, United States Code, to provide for maintenance of public roads used by school buses serving certain Indian reservations; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. MURKOWSKI:

S. 1092. A bill to provide for a transfer of land interests in order to facilitate surface transportation between the cities of Cold Bay, Alaska, and King Cove, Alaska, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. KERRY (for himself and Mr. MCCAIN):

S. 1093. A bill to extend nondiscriminatory treatment (most-favored-nation treatment) to the products of the Lao People's Democratic Republic, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. WYDEN (for himself and Mr. WARNER):

S. Res. 110. A bill to permit an individual with a disability with access to the Senate floor to bring necessary supporting aids and services; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

By Mr. HELMS:

S. Con. Res. 46. An original concurrent resolution expressing the sense of the Senate regarding the terrorist bombing in the Jerusalem market on July 30, 1997; from the Committee on Foreign Relations; placed on the calendar.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. JEFFORDS (for himself, Ms. SNOWE and Mr. LEAHY):

S. 1087. A bill to provide for the modernization of port and rail access in northern New England, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

THE OLDER INDUSTRIAL REGION RAIL/PORT ACCESS AND MODERNIZATION ACT

Mr. JEFFORDS. Mr. President, I rise today with Senator SNOWE to introduce legislation to aid the growth of commerce throughout New England. The Older Industrial Region Rail and Port Access and Modernization Act aims to improve northern New England's aging rail infrastructure and ocean ports to speed delivery of goods and people throughout the region.

New England was built by the railroads. But in our modern economy, highways have captured a majority of the commerce, supplanting rail. As we reach the end of this century, our region has begun to recognize the importance of railroads, and their vital role in our expanding economy. Efficient highways run north to south in northern New England, but we have no east to west roads sufficient to handle growing trade and commerce. As Vermont, New Hampshire, and Maine work together to compete in this global economy, our success is dependent on our mutual efforts to improve access to markets. We will succeed only if modern freight railroads can serve the entire region and through our ports bring goods to market across the Nation and around the world.

Rail lines throughout northern New England have been neglected for many years. Crumbling rail beds and constricted passage has limited the movement of freight and passenger trains and restricted rail access to deep water ports. Older bridges, deteriorated tracks, inadequate tunnels all contribute to a rail system that fails to fulfill the needs of the three-State area. As a result, commerce throughout the region suffers.

A recent report by Cambridge Systematics, entitled "New England Transportation Initiative," indicates that northern New England's economy cannot fully expand without a carefully planned and implemented intermodal strategy. The study predicts that Maine's ports will gradually lose business to southern ports, primarily in New Jersey and New York, because of inadequate rail transportation and port access. In addition, the study predicts that business and jobs in New Hampshire and Vermont will not keep pace with other regions without a better strategy to efficiently move goods and people.

An exhaustive analysis by the Eastern Border Transportation Coalition regarding the trade and traffic flows across the eastern United States-Canada border projected a trade increase of close to 200 percent by the year 2015. The report also outlines that this increase could be hampered by a lack of adequate transportation options and overcrowded roads and highway border stations. To avoid this setback, rail options must be available. Without proper infrastructure development, New England's chance to take advantage of such economic growth will diminish.

The legislation we introduce today will authorize Federal spending to re-

habilitate rail beds in Vermont, Maine, and New Hampshire, enabling them to improve their freight rail traffic and better handle the movement of goods and people with their borders. States will be able to apply separately to the U.S. Secretary of Transportation for individual grants. Grant funding is provided for a variety of categories: Port development and access; bridge and tunnel obstruction repair and replacement; repair of railroad beds; and development of intermodal facilities, including intermodal truck-train transfer facilities. Revitalization of these resources will allow freight and passenger trains to move freely throughout the region, reconnecting railroad towns long separated by the hazards of unpassable tracks.

The bill also establishes a loan assistant program. Railroad companies in Vermont, Maine, and New Hampshire will be able to access low interest loans to improve their rail lines in the region. The loans can be used for purchase of rolling stock, development of maintenance facilities, and many other capital improvements.

Without this legislation, Vermont, New Hampshire, and Maine may fail to benefit from future growth opportunities. Even though international shipping trade is expected to increase by 20 percent in the next 5 years, New England is less likely to benefit from the influx of business and jobs because of its decaying rail and port infrastructure. Improving rail lines will bring new life to our region, strengthening our industries and thereby our economies.

Mr. President, I would urge action on this legislation, because, as we are learning, ports and railroads are the life lines that will help to ensure the well-being of all of northern New England.

Ms. SNOWE. Mr. President, I rise today with my colleague and good friend, Senator JEFFORDS of Vermont, to introduce the Older Industrial Region Rail/Port Access and Modernization Act.

There is an old Yankee saying "you can't get there from here". If we do not take steps to upgrade our aging transportation infrastructure in order to allow us to be a vigorous competitor for the movement of goods, that saying may become a sad reality. That is why the bill we introduce today is so important to northern New England's future, because its purpose is to revitalize our aging rail infrastructure. As much as rail is a part of our Nation's history, it is also the pathway to a bright economic future.

The bill, which covers Vermont, New Hampshire, and Maine, will provide funding for improving and modernizing our freight rail system—removing obstacles like low bridges that constrict the use of double-stack trains, and intermodal facilities construction and maintenance. It would also provide funding to assist Maine's ports in updating and modernizing their facilities