Congratulations to you and your team of researchers that helped make possible this week's announcement that the Lunar Prospector has found evidence of water on the Moon. These exciting results show that research from the Department of Energy's national laboratories is truly ''out of this world.'' Besides demonstrating the value of the Nation's investment in science and technology, discoveries like this excite and inspire young people to pursue science and engineering as careers.

Secretary Peña said it well. I add my congratulations in celebrating another momentous achievement from New Mexico and our national Laboratory in Los Alamos.

Mr. D'AMATO addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New York is recognized.

INTERMODAL SURFACE TRANSPORTATION EFFICIENCY ACT OF 1997

The Senate continued with the consideration of the bill.

AMENDMENT NO. 1931 TO AMENDMENT NO. 1676

(Purpose: To reauthorize the mass transit programs of the Federal Government, and for other purposes)

Mr. D'AMATO. Madam President, I send an amendment to the desk and ask for its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from New York [Mr. D'AMATO] proposes an amendment numbered 1931 to amendment No. 1676.

Mr. D'AMATO. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

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

(The text of the amendment is printed in today's RECORD under ''Amendments Submitted.'')

Mr. D'AMATO. Madam President, I rise today to offer an amendment which will reauthorize the mass transit program under ISTEA.

First of all, I thank my colleagues for the many months of negotiations and hard work necessary to produce this breakthrough agreement which has resulted in the amendment that we have offered.

What I intend to do is just briefly give an outline and, hopefully, with the concurrence of the majority leader and other Members, we will take this matter up for fuller discussion and consideration tomorrow morning. But let me first thank the ranking member on the Banking Committee for his support during this very difficult time. Senator SARBANES has been steadfast in his support and in his approach to working out a balanced transit package.

Let me also thank the chairman of the Budget Committee, Senator DOMENICI, for without him and his ability to see that the levels of increase can be accommodated in the budget, we would have no opportunity of going forward.

Then, of course, there is my friend and colleague, the senior Senator from New York, Senator MOYNIHAN, and his steadfastness in helping to achieve this balance.

In total, our amendment will authorize $41.3 billion for mass transit over the next 3 years. That represents a 30-percent increase from the $31.5 billion authorized in the 1991 ISTEA bill. Our amendment provides for funding levels that are $12.6 billion over the administration's NEXTEA proposal.

The amendment will also provide $5 billion more than the Banking Committee bill reported out by a 17-to-1 margin last September. We have been able to achieve this increase thanks to a bipartisan coalition of 24 Senators, including our present Presiding Officer. I thank the Senator from Texas for her graciousness and for her support, because I think it is a recognition of the growing needs of mass transit.

Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD a letter to the majority and minority leaders which was signed by this bipartisan coalition requesting an increase in mass transit funding.

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

U.S. SENATE,
Washington, DC, February 24, 1998.

Hon. TRENT LOTT,
Russell Senate Office Building,
Washington, DC

Hon. TOM DASCHLE,
Hart Senate Office Building,
Washington, DC

DEAR SENATOR LOTT AND SENATOR DASCHLE: We write to express our support for mass transit funding adequate to meet the nation's growing public transportation needs. While we wish to honor the 1997 Balanced Budget Act, we are convinced that the nation's mass transit needs are not being addressed. As strong supporters of investment in mass transit, we want to underscore our view that any additional surface transportation spending agreed to in the Budget Resolution or subsequently in ISTEA must reflect the historic balance between transit and highways.

Mass transit provides an indispensable service to communities all across the country—in major metropolitan areas, small cities and suburbs, and rural regions. It fosters economic development, offers mobility for working Americans, reduces congestion and improves air quality. Moreover, mass transit supports the transportation needs of our nation's elderly, persons with disabilities, transit-dependent populations and the economically disadvantaged. Millions of Americans use mass transit every day. As demand for more and better transit service soars, we in Congress must help all regions of the country meet those needs.

We are committed to assuring that any efforts to increase federal investments in transportation apply equitably to both mass transit and highway programs. Transit must receive its fair share under any transportation funding proposal under consideration. Maintaining the program balance so carefully crafted in ISTEA will ensure that adequate resources are available to address the nation's surface transportation needs into the next century.

We look forward to working with you to advance a balanced transportation investment policy that meets our nation's transit and highway needs.

Sincerely,

Alfonse D'Amato, Ted Kennedy, Paul Wellstone, Jack Reed, Richard H. Bryan, Daniel Moynihan, Chuck Robb, Chris Dodd, Paul Sarbanes, Dick Durbin, Arlen Specter, Robert G. Torricelli, Rick Santorum, Harry Reid, Barbara Boxer, John F. Kerry, Frank R. Lautenberg, Barbara A. Mikulski, Joseph Lieberman, Carol Moseley-Braun, Robert F. Bennett, Ron Wyden, and Mary Landrieu.

Mr. D'AMATO. Madam President, these additional funds will benefit transit operators of all sizes in both urban and rural areas, and in order to meet the new demands for bus and rail systems across the Nation, half the increase—$2.5 billion—will be spent only on new starts. The rural transit program will enjoy a $354 million increase over the amount authorized in the 1991 ISTEA bill.

Over the last 15 years, transit funding has remained relatively flat while highway funding has soared. In 1982, the Federal Government spent $4 billion on mass transit and $9 billion on highways. In 1998, the Government will spend $4.8 billion on transit while spending has grown to $23 billion.

Meanwhile, the demands for transit funding have grown exponentially. Communities in high-growth cities are facing problems of traffic congestion and poor air quality while older transit cities, such as New York and Chicago, need additional funds to maintain and improve transit service. With this increase in mass transit funding, we can now address many of these needs.

More than 80 million Americans, almost one-third of the U.S. population, cannot drive or do not have access to a car. For these people, mass transit is usually the only means of transportation available. The Nation's 32 million senior citizens and 24 million people with disabilities require reliable, safe public transportation service to maintain their independence.

According to the Federal Transit Administration's annual report, U.S. businesses would lose $15 billion a year because of highway traffic congestion if all U.S. transit commuters drove to work instead. More than half of all transit trips are work trips, and people who use transit come from every income level and demographic background.

Federal transit programs benefit communities of all sizes across the Nation. Today, rural transit carries riders more than a billion miles every year. Rural areas have a higher percentage of elderly and disabled populations who are increasingly dependent on mass transit for basic transportation needs.

Madam President, in closing, I thank the chairman of the Environment and Public Works Committee, Senator CHAFEE.

Mr. SARBANES has been a steadfast ally in these negotiations.

And, once again, without the cooperation of my Budget Committee

chairman, Senator DOMENICI, and the ranking member, Senator LAUTENBERG, we never would have come to this point.

I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD a proposed summary of the amendment, for those Senators and staffs who wish to review the amendment.

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

SUMMARY OF D'AMATO-SARBANES AMENDMENT FEDERAL TRANSIT ACT OF 1997

Section 1. Short Title and Table of Contents
Section 2. Authorizations

The bill authorizes a total of $41.3 billion for federal transit programs over the 6 year period from FY 1998 to 2003. This represents a $9.8 billion increase (31%) over ISTEA authorizations of $31.5 billion.

$36.3 billion of $41.3 billion total was authorized in the Banking Committee bill. S. 1271, while $5 billion comes from the ''Transportation Equity Act'' negotiated with Sen. Domenici et al.

Section 3. Capital Projects and Small Area Flexibility

Expands definition of capital to include preventive maintenance, leasing, intelligent transportation systems, deployment of new technology and joint development activities.

Allows small urbanized areas (50,000 to 200,000 population) to use their funds for operating or capital, as rural areas now do.

Section 4. Metropolitan Planning

Modifies current planning requirements similar to the Senate highway bill recently reported by the EPW Committee, and makes other changes.

Section 5. Metropolitan Planning Organizations

Requires MPOs in transportation management areas designated after 1991 to include a representative of transit users.

Section 6. Farebox Revenues

Allows proceeds from farebox revenue bonds to be used as the local share for financing capital projects.

Section 7. Clean Fuels Program

Creates a new Clean Fuels formula grant program to assist transit systems in purchasing low emissions vehicles and related equipment. Participation is voluntary and the federal share is 80%. Funds are provided separately for large and small areas, with a cap on what any one recipient can receive. Eligible technologies may include compressed natural gas, hybrid electric, biodiesel and other clean technologies.

Section 8. Capital Investment Grant and Loans

Extends current 40/40/20 split between Discretionary grants for New Starts, Bus and Fixed Guideway Modernization projects.

Section 9. Transit Supportive Land Use

Adds benefits of transit-oriented land use to the factors to be considered by the Secretary in reviewing New Starts projects.

Section 10. New Starts

Limits the amount of New Starts funding that can be used for other than final design and construction to 8 percent.

Section 11. Joint Partnership for Deployment of Innovation

Permits FTA to join with a consortia of public and private organizations to undertake research and deploy new transit technology.

Section 12. Workplace Safety

Provides additional funding to the National Mass Transit Institute to provide workplace safety training to public transit employees.

Section 13. University Transportation Centers

Restores current law regarding University Transportation Centers, repeals change by Senate Highway bill reported by EPW Committee.

Section 14. Job Access Grants

Authorizes $100 million per year for a new ''Job Access Grants'' program to assist welfare recipients and other low-income individuals get to and from jobs.

Section 15. Grant Requirements

Conforms transit grant requirements to match those under the Federal highway program.

Section 16. HHS and Public Transit Service

Requires coordination of Human Service Agency transportation providers and public transit systems to improve efficiency.

Section 17. Proceeds from the Sale of Transit Assets

Permits a transit recipient to sell an asset purchased with federal funds and retain the proceeds as long as the proceeds are used for mass transit purposes.

Section 18. Operating Assistance for Small Transit Systems in Large Urbanized Areas

Requires large urban areas to consider the impact of any operating aid reductions on the smaller transit operators within the same urban area.

Section 19. Appointment of Appropriations for Fixed Guideway Modernization

Adopts the modified formula for this program as recommended by APTA. Maintains the existing distribution for the first $760 million, and allocates an increasing share of program growth to newer rail systems.

Section 20. Urbanized Area Formula Study

Requires the Secretary to study the current urbanized area formula to determine whether changes are needed to reflect the fact that some small urban areas under 200,000 population carry more passengers per mile or hour than larger systems over 200,000 population.

Ms. COLLINS addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine is recognized.

Ms. COLLINS. Madam President, I rise today in support of S. 1173, the highway reauthorization legislation currently pending before the Senate. Passage of this ISTEA legislation will be very beneficial to the people of my State and to Maine's economy.

Before beginning my remarks tonight, I commend the distinguished managers of this comprehensive legislation, Senator JOHN CHAFEE and Senator MAX BAUCUS. They have worked diligently to produce a broad, bipartisan consensus for this complicated 6-year reauthorization bill. I commend them for their efforts today, and I look forward to working with them as this legislation continues to move through the Senate, be passed by the House, be reconciled in conference and ultimately to be signed into law by the President.

The State of Maine has 1.2 million people. They are spread out across roughly 34,000 square miles. Our State has, by far, the lowest population density in all of New England. Consequently, continuing to improve and upgrade our roads, our highways, our bridges is essential to Maine's future prosperity.

Studies have shown that roughly 80 percent of all economic development occurs within 10 miles on either side of our interstate highway. Thus, the expansion and improvement of our transportation system are vital to increasing job opportunities for all the citizens of our State.

From Maine's perspective, the 1998 ISTEA legislation builds upon the successes of the 1991 law and will continue to provide Maine with needed funding to build, repair, and maintain our surface transportation system into the 21st century.

Madam President, Maine, like other northeastern States, is facing an aging transportation infrastructure. It requires maintenance, rehabilitation, and in some cases outright replacement. S. 1173, as amended, would provide Maine with vitally needed funds for transportation. It would provide a much-needed boost in the funding that would go to my State.

Under the 1991 ISTEA law, Maine received approximately $118 million in annual highway funding. With the adoption of the amendment worked out by the Senator from Rhode Island last week, which I strongly supported, this legislation will now authorize $144 million in transportation spending for Maine annually.

This, Madam President, is good news for our State. It represents a 22 percent increase over the average of the State under the 1991 law. Clearly, this increase will be very beneficial for the people of Maine. The ability of the economy of Maine to grow and offer new and exciting job opportunities to its people is directly related to the quality and the availability of our transportation system. In addition, the higher funding levels should enable the State to pursue some very high-priority transportation projects over the next 6 years.

For example, Madam President, as a native of Aroostook County, I have long been a strong supporter of a four-lane, limited-access highway project in Aroostook County. We need such a highway—all the way from Houlton to Fort Kent—and I am committed to doing everything possible to assist in this vital effort. The higher funding levels authorized by this legislation should enable the State of Maine to continue moving this vitally important project forward by completing the next stage, the environmental studies.

Another important transportation project for Maine will be the efforts to improve our roads and highways that cross the State in an east-west direction. There is also considerable interest in the State in undertaking studies to look at constructing an east-west highway to improve trade and opportunity throughout the State.

In recent years, the prospect of an east-west highway has been getting more and more attention, and the increased highway funding contained in

the legislation before us today will assist the State in exploring this exciting new opportunity. Madam President, the ISTEA legislation will also help the State of Maine with other important priorities, such as replacing aging bridges, developing our cargo ports, and improving critical economic corridors throughout the entire State.

These suggest a few of the very important transportation projects that the State of Maine can and should consider moving forward with just as soon as this Congress completes action on the long-term surface transportation reauthorization.

Madam President, the ISTEA legislation will help Maine and its people maintain and develop a transportation system that will meet the challenges of the future. Again, I commend the distinguished managers of this bill for all of their hard work, and I am very pleased to support their efforts in passing this much needed and vitally important legislation.

I thank you, Madam President, and I yield the floor.

Mr. D'AMATO. Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. D'AMATO. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

TRIBUTE TO MELVIN R. LAIRD

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, the Melvin R. Laird Center, a medical research facility, was recently dedicated in Marshfield, Wisconsin. The event brought together political notables from both parties, past and present. Former-President Gerald Ford delivered, what I believe, is one of his finest speeches of his long career of service to the public.

Although Mel Laird may be best remembered for his service as Secretary of Defense during a turbulent period of the Vietnam war, when it was my privilege to serve in the Navy Secretariat, he devoted a full lifetime of public service in the course of improving quality of life in medical fields. This chapter of public service must be made permanent, so I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD President Ford's Remarks about this medical facility—an institution to which Mel Laird gave a full measure of devotion.

There being no objection, the remarks were ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

PRESIDENT FORD'S REMARKS, SEPTEMBER 12, 1997, THE LAIRD CENTER DEDICATION

Thank you, Bob, for that most generous introduction. What an honor to participate in this special tribute to a very special, extraordinary friend. I'm loath to refer to Mel as an elder statesman—if only because of something Harry Truman once said. Candid as ever, Mr. Truman defined a statesman as a politician who has been dead for twenty years.

Perhaps in this case it would be more accurate to say that Mel has been out of active, visible politics for twenty years. But that hasn't prevented Henry Kissinger, Bob Michel, John Rhodes, Governor Nelson, Larry Eagleburger, or David Broder from assembling here to honor Mel for his outstanding service in the U.S. Navy and the Wisconsin legislature—on Capitol Hill and at the Pentagon. In the words of Readers Digest, I regard Mel Laird as one of the most unforgettable characters I have ever met!

I've just come from a private tour of the new Laird Center, which enabled me to see firsthand the pioneering application of molecular genetics to the field of preventive medicine. Needless to say, Mel, you should be very, very proud of this state of the art facility that bears your name. The Center is a magnificent tribute in brick and mortar. But it is much more than that. It is also a dynamic institution whose greatest benefits will accrue to generations yet unborn.

I can't help but reflect, Mel, on how proud John Fogerty, your partner in providing health are funds in the annual Labor, Health, Education and Welfare Appropriations Bill, would be—both of you and of the Center here in Marshfield.

As you all know, age has its privileges, among them the chance to wax nostalgic from time to time. I can hardly believe that over forty years have passed since our first meeting, Mel. It was January 3, 1953, the day you were sworn in as a freshman in the House of Representatives.

I can't honestly say that I was surprised at your swearing in by Speaker Sam Rayburn in the House Chamber. Several months earlier, members of the Wisconsin delegation had tipped me off to an outstanding State Senator from the Marshfield area whom they were convinced would be elected to the House in November 1952.

Come Election Day their prophecy was emphatically confirmed by voters. For Mel it was the first of nine such triumphs at the polls. Over the next sixteen years he more than lived up to his advance billings. From the outset, Marshfield's favorite son was a highly effective member of the House Committee on Appropriations. As the senior Republican on the HEW Subcommittee, he won the respect and confidence of members on both sides of the political aisle.

Long before today's talk of a health crisis in America, Mel Laird was legislating in hopes of averting a crisis. Having served with John and Mel on the House Committee on Appropriations, I think it's no exaggeration to call the period from 1953 through 1969 the Fogerty/Laird Years. Certainly their influence on the NIH was pivotal as they oversaw a vast expansion of American health research programs and facilities. At least five Secretaries of HEW know of Mel's constructive impact on rural health care delivery systems. They know, because he brought them to Marshfield to see for themselves the Clinic's tremendous programs for a major area in Wisconsin.

Of course, there were times during those years when the Republican elephant itself required a little emergency care. It will come as no surprise to his friends and neighbors that Mel was always intensely interested in electing a Republican majority in the House of Representatives. To tell the truth, I was just as interested in electing a Republican Speaker. So, in the late 1950s, when a group of so-called ''Young Turks'' joined forces to overthrow Joe Martin in favor of Congressman Charlie Halleck of Indiana, Mel and I were all for the change.

In the wake of the Goldwater debacle of 1964, history repeated itself. Only this time around, these by now ''Middle Aged Turks'' were looking for a candidate to challenge Halleck. Mel urged me to run, and thanks in no small part to his efforts, I won that election by the landslide margin of 73/67. Mel became GOP Conference Chairman. For the next four years we worked in tandem on legislative programs that helped revitalize the Republican party and elect Dick Nixon President in 1968.

I well remember a day in December 1968 when we found ourselves in Palm Springs, California, attending a Republican Governors' Conference. Walter Annenberg hosted a luncheon honoring the President-elect, at which Henry Kissinger was present as the new head of the NSC. Between the main course and dessert Nixon announced that Walter would become his Ambassador to Great Britain and Mel Laird was to be Secretary of Defense.

Mel's friends were overjoyed by his selection. Knowing of his impressive military record in the Navy in WWII and his subsequent service as one of Capitol Hill's genuine defense experts; admiring his uncommon common sense and his sound political judgment, I believed that Mel would be of enormous help to President Nixon as he struggled to find a responsible solution to the tragedy of Vietnam. No less important, I felt certain that Mel and Henry could jointly resolve that terribly difficult issue. Nixon was fortunate to have them on his team.

They can tell you, far better than I, just how the Paris Accord was achieved, followed by the withdrawal of American forces from Vietnam. Let me say this: few public servants have been so tested by events, or have so confirmed the confidence of their admirers, as Mel Laird in those days of tumult and challenge. After four arduous years at the Pentagon he tried to retire. But by then he was Washington's Indispensable Man. President Nixon immediately drafted him as a Presidential Counselor for Domestic Affairs.

In an era when the White House was tainted by scandal, Mel Laird stood out as a model of personal and political integrity. The resignation of Vice President Agnew in October 1973 touched off speculation over who Nixon might choose to replace him under the 25th Amendment. Two days after Agnew's departure Betty and I were having a quiet dinner at our home in Alexandria, Virginia, when the phone rang. It was Mel calling from the White House. He told me that the Democrat controlled House and Senate were unlikely to confirm Rockefeller, Reagan or Connally. In fact, both Speaker Albert and Senator Mike Mansfield were recommending my name as an alternative.

Mel asked whether I had any interest in the job. Frankly, his question came like a bolt out of the blue. My ambition was to be Speaker of the House, not Vice President. I told Mel that I would consult with Betty and call him back. That evening Betty and I agreed that 3½ years as Vice President would be a nice way to end my quarter century in Washington. I passed our decision onto Mel, and the rest, as they say, is history.

Of course, history doesn't stop for anyone. So let me suggest another way we could all honor our friend. This Center will perpetuate Mel's work in the health field. Wouldn't it be great if our politics today could also reflect his blend of principle and pragmatism? You might not guess it from watching The McLaughlin Group, but at heart most Americans are pragmatists. We want to make things work. We value authenticity at least as much as ideology—especially in this age when so much of what passes for American public life seems unreal if not irrelevant.

Mel will recall vividly the days when I used to play straight man to Senator Everett