

could be a huge and unnecessary financial burden.

I did feel it was important to clarify those three points. There is much else I could say about this issue, but I recognize that undoubtedly the Presiding Officer and others are eager to get to the briefing.

RECESS SUBJECT TO THE CALL OF THE CHAIR

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate recess subject to the call of the Chair.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 5:05 p.m., recessed subject to the call of the Chair and reassembled at 6:25 p.m. when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. PERDUE).

TRANSPORTATION, HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2016—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PERDUE). The majority leader.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk for the Collins substitute amendment No. 2812.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on Senate amendment No. 2812, the substitute amendment to H.R. 2577, an act making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes.

Mitch McConnell, Susan M. Collins, Jerry Moran, John Boozman, Steve Daines, John Hoeven, Cory Gardner, Dan Sullivan, Joni Ernst, Daniel Coats, Johnny Isakson, Orrin G. Hatch, Lamar Alexander, Mike Crapo, Richard Burr, Shelley Moore Capito, Michael B. Enzi.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. MCCONNELL. I send a cloture motion to the desk for the underlying bill, H.R. 2577.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on Calendar No. 138, H.R. 2577, an act making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes.

Mitch McConnell, Susan M. Collins, Jerry Moran, John Boozman, Steve

Daines, John Hoeven, Cory Gardner, Dan Sullivan, Daniel Coats, Johnny Isakson, Orrin G. Hatch, Lamar Alexander, Mike Crapo, Richard Burr, Shelley Moore Capito, Michael B. Enzi, Joni Ernst.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum call under rule XXII with respect to the cloture motions be waived.

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

The Senator from Alaska.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, I wish to speak about an amendment I plan on offering tomorrow to the Transportation bill we are working on right now on the Senate floor. It is a common-sense amendment. It is an amendment about safety. It is an amendment about protecting our citizens. It is an amendment about cutting through redtape. It is an amendment about what the vast majority of Americans want us to do in the Senate, which is to start to get things done in this body. It is a simple amendment.

This is what my amendment does. It would allow States and communities throughout this country of ours the ability to expedite the Federal permitting process, the regulatory process on the construction and rebuilding of bridges. It is pretty simple. It doesn't get much more simple than that.

Everybody needs infrastructure. Every community in America needs bridges. It would only apply to bridges—critical pieces of infrastructure—bridges that are built in the same place, the same size, bridges that in the United States are falling apart.

We have talked about this on the Senate floor for the last several months. Our Nation's infrastructure is crumbling. The American Society of Civil Engineers gives America's infrastructure a D-plus. We are failing. For our infrastructure, in the classroom, we are the D-plus students.

This is, of course, bad for our Nation's economy. There is nothing more central to a country that wants to grow its economy, that wants to compete globally, than sound infrastructure for transportation. In a country of our size facing economic challenges, America's infrastructure can either drive growth and opportunity or it can slow down growth and opportunity and undermine it. Right now, that is what we are doing. We are slowing it down. We are undermining it. It is worse than that. It is worse than just undermining our own economic opportunity. The state of our infrastructure is actually dangerous for our citizens.

I agree that we must have stable funding for infrastructure. That is why I have been a strong supporter of the DRIVE Act and this bill, in terms of a 6-year highway bill, under the DRIVE Act. But we also need to focus on something else that is driving up the cost of our Nation's infrastructure: redtape that is stopping critical projects in America from moving forward. Like so

many construction projects in this country, the environmental review process our bridges face is deathly slow and cumbersome and enormously expensive. We live in a redtape nation, particularly when it comes to infrastructure. We can't build the way we used to in this country.

Consider just a few statistics. The average time for environmental reviews for a major transportation project in the United States in 2011 was 8 years. That is up from 3½ years just 10 years earlier. The average environmental impact statement when NEPA was written was 22 pages. Now the average environmental impact statement is over 1,000 pages.

Let me give one example that came up in the Commerce Committee. We were talking about airport infrastructure—again, critical to the country. Seattle had built a new runway. When I asked the witness who was in charge of that runway how long it took to build, he said 3 years. That is a pretty long time, but it is a big runway, kind of complicated. Then I asked how long it took to get the Federal permits and regulatory permission from the Federal Government to build that new runway. The answer: 15 years. Fifteen years. The entire room gasped.

No American wants this. We need to do a lot more to get back to common-sense permitting and regulatory reform for America's infrastructure.

So we are starting on critical pieces of infrastructure that everybody can agree with. That is what this amendment does. It focuses solely on bridges. Our bridges are an increasingly important issue. One in 10 of our Nation's bridges—roughly 607,000 bridges in the United States—is structurally insufficient. Let me repeat that in a different way. In the United States, there are more than 600,000 bridges in need of repair. The average age of our bridges is 42 years old. So we need to repair them. We need to rebuild them. But what we don't need is the Federal Government taking 6 to 7 or 8 to 9 years to give us permission to rebuild bridges. There is not one American who thinks that would be a good idea. Yet, if we keep the law the same, that is exactly what is going to happen.

Communities need to rebuild bridges, and it is going to take several years to get permission from agencies in this town to allow them to do it. To do what? To build on the same land, to just build a bridge. We need to change that.

Thousands of communities across the country are simply keeping their fingers crossed when Americans cross structurally deficient bridges 215 million times a day. Let me repeat that. In this great country, Americans cross structurally deficient bridges 215 million times a day. So we need to fix them. They are being crossed by our trucks, carrying our Nation's commerce, our children in schoolbuses, parents trying to get home in time for dinner. These are people we should be protecting.

That is what my amendment does. It says that we are going to work to fix this infrastructure with the bill that we are working on, that my colleague from Maine is leading on with the DRIVE Act. But we are also going to be smart. We are not going to require Americans to take half a decade to get permission from the Federal Government to rebuild a bridge.

These bridges sustain our economy, they connect our communities, they connect us, they keep us safe, and we need to expedite the ability to fix our infrastructure in this country, starting with our bridges. That is all this amendment does. It is simple. It is common sense. I hope that if I can bring this to the floor, we will get a unanimous vote in favor of this amendment.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, let me commend my colleague from Alaska for raising this important issue.

First, it is important to understand that his amendment only applies to structurally deficient bridges. These are bridges that are deteriorating and that need extensive renovation or replacement. And it is important that we address the problem of structurally deficient bridges before they become unsafe to use. That is the risk, and that is what my colleague from Alaska is attempting to address with his amendment. He is proposing that if we are replacing a structurally deficient bridge in exactly the same place, that we do not need to start all over again with an environmental impact statement that may delay the replacement of this structurally deficient bridge for literally years, not to mention the enormous cost that is undertaken when with an environmental impact statement and all the attendant studies are done. He is correct that the amount of time to do this kind of analysis, as well as the length of these studies, has grown enormously in recent years, and that, too, is a problem when we are dealing with a structurally deficient bridge.

I believe this is a commonsense amendment. I would not want to waive environmental impact studies if the bridge were going to be built in a new location. Then we would need to do that kind of careful environmental analysis and review to make sure the environmental impact is well under-

stood. But that is not what Senator SULLIVAN is proposing. He is proposing that for this one category of bridges, we would not have to do the environmental impact statement if it is being rebuilt in exactly the same place. I think this makes sense. I think this is the kind of common sense that my colleague from Alaska has brought to Washington, and I commend him for his amendment.

I do know there are some concerns, I believe, on the other side of the aisle, and I appreciate the Senator from Alaska working with us. But I, for one, believe his amendment does make sense. It is narrowly tailored, and I believe it should be adopted by this body.

Thank you, Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, I wish to thank my colleague from Maine for her comments. I very much appreciate her support. We will work with the others if they have questions.

I have worked on a number of issues now in my first year in the Senate with my colleague from Rhode Island, and I certainly want to make sure he is comfortable with this commonsense amendment. But I guarantee my colleagues, whether it is in Maine or Alaska or Rhode Island, if our citizens look—it doesn't matter; Democrat or Republican—at an amendment like this, I think the vast majority of them would say: Of course. Of course that is what we should be doing—protecting our citizens, building infrastructure, protecting the environment, but not making things take forever. That is what we are trying to do.

So I appreciate the kind words of the Senator from Maine about the amendment, and I am hoping we can move forward on this tomorrow.

Thank you. I yield the floor.

Ms. COLLINS. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

MORNING BUSINESS

Ms. COLLINS. 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.

BUDGETARY REVISIONS

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, section 251 of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 establishes statutory limits on discretionary spending and allows for various adjustments to those limits, while sections 302 and 314(a) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 allow the chairman of the Budget Committee to establish and make revisions to allocations, aggregates, and levels consistent with those adjustments. Today the Senate agreed to consider H.R. 2577, the Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2016, as reported by the Committee on Appropriations. The bill includes a provision related to the Department of Housing and Urban Development's administrative costs for disaster relief activities that results in \$1 million in outlays. This provision is designated as an emergency pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Deficit Control Act of 1985. The inclusion of this designation makes this spending eligible for an adjustment under the Congressional Budget Act.

As a result, I am increasing the budgetary aggregate for 2016 by \$1 million in outlays. I am also increasing the 2016 allocations to the Appropriations Committee by \$1 million in outlays.

I ask unanimous consent that the accompanying tables, which provide details about the adjustment, be printed in the RECORD.

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

REVISION TO BUDGETARY AGGREGATES

(Pursuant to Section 311 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 and S. Con. Res. 11, the Concurrent Resolution on the Budget for Fiscal Year 2016)

	\$ in millions	2016
Current Spending Aggregates:		
Budget Authority .....		3,033,488
Outlays .....		3,091,973
Adjustments:		
Budget Authority .....		0
Outlays .....		1
Revised Spending Aggregates:		
Budget Authority .....		3,033,488
Outlays .....		3,091,974

REVISION TO SPENDING ALLOCATION TO THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2016

(Pursuant to Sections 302 and 314(a) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974)

	\$ in millions	2016
Current Allocation:		
Revised Security Discretionary Budget Authority .....		523,091
Revised Nonsecurity Category Discretionary Budget Authority* .....		494,191
General Purpose Outlays* .....		1,157,344
Adjustments:		
Revised Security Discretionary Budget Authority .....		0
Revised Nonsecurity Category Discretionary Budget Authority .....		0
General Purpose Outlays .....		1
Revised Allocation:		
Revised Security Discretionary Budget Authority .....		523,091
Revised Nonsecurity Category Discretionary Budget Authority .....		494,191
General Purpose Outlays .....		1,157,345