

needed at this time. The Air Traffic Control system continues to crumble and the safety of the system is in the balance. Your bill provides the funding stream necessary to modernize the system that is in need of repair. We will be working with hope that S. 1239 succeeds the mark up and are encouraging the committee members to assist in this endeavor.

NATCA applauds your efforts to reform the air traffic control system. It has been a long in coming and it took your leadership to finally make it a reality.

Your bill provides the flexibility the FAA needs to meet the demands of the 21st century while protecting the interests of the men and women who operate the air traffic control system. Union support provides for continuation of collective bargaining agreements, representational status for NATCA and other unions and provides for the duty to bargain in good faith. Your bill allows the employees who will have to live and work under the new system the ability to develop the system.

Thank you for drafting a bill which will provide the necessary reform to modernize the FAA and make it more responsive to the users.

Respectfully,

MIKE McNALLY,
Executive Vice President.

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY
BOARD,

Washington, DC, November 8, 1995.

Hon. LARRY PRESSLER,
Chairman, Committee on Commerce, Science,
and Transportation, U.S. Senate, Washing-
ton, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN PRESSLER: It is my understanding that tomorrow the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation will mark up S. 1239, the Air Traffic Management System Performance Improvement Act of 1995. Although the full Board has not taken a position on this legislation, I did want to share my personal views with you.

As Chairman of the National Transportation Safety Board, I see on a daily basis the immense job the Federal Aviation Administration has to accomplish. The competition for funds during a period of tighter federal budgets, the need to anticipate and justify future staffing requirements annually, and the protracted process for procurement of new equipment, are all factors that can degrade efficiency and affect the ability of the system to respond to new demands and new technology. I believe the reforms in S. 1239 remedy this deficiency, without taking the aviation trust fund off budget, and I hope the Commerce Committee will fully support this bill.

Many of the safety enhancing actions identified by the Board in the past have required research, development, procurement and installation programs that span several years. Examples are Terminal Doppler Weather Radar, Airborne Collision Avoidance Systems, airport surface surveillance and conflict detection equipment. Many of these programs have experienced development and installation schedule slippages. So, too, has the FAA's air traffic control system modernization programs. It is difficult for the Board to determine the role of budget planning in these slippages; however, it is obvious that the need to justify budgets and establish priorities during this period when the Federal government must tighten budgets could have an impact on significant safety programs. This bill would ensure the continuation of that funding in a fiscally responsible manner.

Mr. Chairman, we take great pride that America's aviation industry is the safest in

the World. Without a predictable source of funds, there is the potential that new safety-related technical systems may be delayed, degrading that safety. The FAA, the agency responsible for the implementation and administration of these systems, believes that this bill will greatly improve the prospects for the acquisition of these critically important safety systems. I concur in their judgement on this matter.

Sincerely,

JIM HALL,
Chairman.

Mr. McCAIN. I want to repeat what the National Transportation Safety Board is saying about this legislation, so the opponents, the ones who are trying to hold up this bill and perhaps derail it, understand what is at stake here. I want to repeat it so it is perfectly clear to my colleagues and to the American public who want this legislation to move forward.

I quote from the letter to chairman PRESSLER from the National Transportation Safety Board:

Without a predictable source of funds, there is the potential that new safety-related technical systems may be delayed, degrading that safety. The FAA, the agency responsible for the implementation and administration of these systems, believes that this bill will greatly improve the prospects for the acquisition of these critically important safety systems. I concur in their judgement on this matter.

Signed by J. Hall, the Chairman of the National Transportation Safety Board.

I am not supporting this bill because I put in 2 years of hard work with Senator FORD, Senator HOLLINGS, Senator PRESSLER, Senator STEVENS, Linda Daschle, David Hinson, Secretary Peña, Jim Hall, the National Air Traffic Controllers Association, the Air Transport Association, the Air Freight Association, and people like my friend from North Dakota, Senator DORGAN, who has played such a key and important role in ensuring not only airline safety but also the access to airline service in smaller States. Few have been a stronger supporter of the Essential Air Service Program which remains a lifeline for many small communities. This bill has the funding tools in place that will be vital for financing this program in the future.

I am not talking about all that. I have worked on other issues that took a long period of time and have failed. That has been sort of one of the difficulties I have had around here from time to time.

What I am talking about is the safety and security of all Americans. If the Senator from Massachusetts, who I am sorry is not here on the floor, wants to lead the opposition, then the American people should know whose responsibility it is that we do not pass this legislation. What a small minority finds objectionable is a correction, a technical correction, to a drafting error which was contained in the Interstate Commerce Commission Termination Act of 1995 that was passed, that everybody recognized was written incorrectly. That is what we are talking about

here. If we do not pass this legislation and get it done soon—in fact, by midnight tonight, in less than 14 hours—then critical funding will be cut off to airports across the country and our national air transportation system will expire. And I fear, frankly, for what can happen in the future and, frankly, I do not want to have that responsibility.

Finally, I will probably be back on the floor on this issue. I strongly urge my colleague from Illinois, for whom I have the greatest respect and affection, I strongly urge my other colleagues to understand what is at stake here and for us to get this legislation done as quickly as possible and not worry about a small technical correction to a drafting error that is all that is involved here.

So, I will be back—I hope not to be back on this issue. But I, like my colleague from Alaska, do not intend to allow the Senate to go out of session until we have this issue resolved, and will use every parliamentary method available to me to make sure that we address this bill and pass it.

I have had a conversation with the distinguished majority leader on this issue. I know he shares my view of the importance and criticality of this legislation. I hold every hope and aspiration that we will have this issue resolved as quickly as possible.

Again, expressing my deep appreciation to all of the individuals, all of the different entities that have been involved in shaping this legislation that took us over two years, I am not about to see it derailed at this point because of a minor objection that really has very little, if any, relevance to the importance of the bill.

I yield the floor.

Mrs. BOXER addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. HUTCHISON). The Senator from California.

Mrs. BOXER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to address the Senate for 3 minutes, to be followed by the Senator from North Dakota for 30 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection? Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mrs. BOXER. Thank you very much, Madam President.

STILL TIME TO PASS BILLS

Mrs. BOXER. Madam President, as we can all see from the conversation that has been going on here for the last hour, we still have additional business pending before the Senate. We certainly must pass the FAA bill, and I am hopeful we can do so, while resolving the one controversial area that remains. We heard the Senator from Alaska, Senator STEVENS, say the House is out of session, implying that they couldn't act if the legislation was stripped of the controversial piece. We heard the Senator from Illinois say, "Untrue, the House is still there, they

could take action." We need to find out the truth, we need to find out the answer, and we need to move forward.

Madam President, we have a wonderful opportunity yet remaining in the waning hours to pass the Presidio parks bill. After much dedicated work on both sides of the aisle over in the House and with the administration on Friday and Saturday, the House passed a Presidio parks bill with many important parts for this country in it. There is only one body that has to act on this bill, and that is the U.S. Senate. If we can all agree, we can pass, by unanimous consent, this Presidio parks bill.

As I understand it, it includes many wonderful projects all over this country. It would be an environmental gift for the people of this country, and I can tell you that my leader, Senator DASCHLE, expressed to me his great interest in seeing us do it, and from the remarks of the majority leader, Senator LOTT, I feel very optimistic that we can.

From the East to the West, the North and the South, there are parts in this bill that I think we all want. Does everybody get everything he or she might want? Of course not. It is never possible. The Presidio parks bill is one of great compromise, even on the issue that I care so much about.

On the Presidio itself, we had to compromise. So I don't think any Member can say it is a perfect bill. There may be something in there you don't love, and there may be something not included in there you want included, but I think we do have an opportunity to do something for the American people and go home and be extremely proud. The Presidio Park will become a jewel of the National Park System, and the legislation encompasses a wonderful idea that really was brought to the table from the Pennsylvania Avenue Corporation when we remodeled and rejuvenated Pennsylvania Avenue, and it is a board of trustees totally nonprofit with experts in real estate and experts in historic preservation sitting on it and overseeing it.

Congresswoman PELOSI has worked so hard on this—I used to represent the Presidio when I was in the House—as well as Congressman GEORGE MILLER, Senator FEINSTEIN, Senator MURKOWSKI, and Senator CHAFEE and many others. I do hope that we can pass the parks bill by unanimous consent, but I have asked my leader to keep us here, because I do believe if we had to vote on a cloture motion, we could carry that cloture vote, and we would overwhelmingly pass this parks bill.

Madam President, I hope we can do it quickly, but, if not, I hope we will stay here and work for the American people, resolve the FAA problem, resolve this parks bill, pass this continuing resolution and go home feeling proud that we have a safer Nation, we have a stronger Nation, and we have a more beautiful Nation.

Thank you very much. I now yield to my friend.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota is recognized. Mr. CONRAD. I thank the Chair.

THE CLINTON RECORD AND SENATOR DOLE'S ECONOMIC AGENDA

Mr. CONRAD. Madam President, we have now come to what may be the last day of the congressional session. Perhaps it will take another day or two for Congress to adjourn.

I would just like to observe that this is what we have been handed on the final day. I do not know how many pages are here. I assume it is at least a thousand pages. We are handed this massive bill—that few of us have seen—because once again Congress has failed to do its job on time.

Here we are on the eve of the next fiscal year, and six appropriations bills have to be rolled into one in order to prevent a shutdown of Government. Madam President, this is not the way to do business. I doubt there are very many Members who have any idea what is in this omnibus consolidated appropriations bill. I certainly do not.

We got this stack this morning. We are going to vote, they tell us, sometime this evening. You know, I am a pretty fast reader, but I do not think I can get this job done in time to make any kind of reasoned judgment on what is included. This is not the way we ought to do our business.

Madam President, it does seem to me to be an appropriate time to review the record of what has happened over the last several years. I would just like to start with the question of deficit reduction, because we hear a lot of talk about who is conservative and who is not conservative. Frankly, I do not think it matters so much who is liberal, who is conservative; I think what the American people are interested in is who gets results, because that is at the end of the day what really matters.

If we look at our last three Presidents on the question of the deficits, the results are now very clear. We look back to 1981, President Reagan inherited a deficit of about \$79 billion. Very quickly the deficit skyrocketed to over \$200 billion, and it was stuck at that figure for most of his term. At the end of President Reagan's term we saw some slight improvement, but still the deficit was about twice as high as the deficit he had inherited. So it is not surprising that the American debt grew dramatically during those years.

Then, of course, came the Bush administration. President Bush inherited a deficit of \$153 billion, and it promptly went out of control. In the last year of the Bush Presidency, the deficit was up to \$290 billion.

Then President Clinton came in, and in each and every year of the Clinton administration, the deficit has gone down; \$255 billion the first year, down to \$116 billion this year. So the President has done an outstanding job of deficit reduction.

Some have said, "Well, he doesn't really deserve any credit." It is inter-

esting to look at what an impartial observer says. The head of the Federal Reserve, Chairman Greenspan, says the deficit reduction in President Clinton's 1993 economic plan was "an unquestioned factor in contributing to the improvement in economic activity that occurred thereafter." Certainly Mr. Greenspan is correct.

We passed in 1993 an economic plan that cut spending and that raised revenue, and that in combination reduced the budget deficit. Because the deficit was coming down, interest rates came down, and economic activity increased. Mr. Greenspan says that plan was "an unquestioned factor in contributing to the improvement in economic activity that occurred thereafter."

Perhaps this is an appropriate time to start looking at the record. What did happen? Well, one of the things we often talk about is the misery index. The misery index is a measure of unemployment and inflation.

Look what has happened to the misery index over the last 28 years. We have the lowest misery index now, after 4 years of the Clinton administration, the lowest misery index in 28 years.

The good news does not stop there. We have also seen strong economic growth under the Clinton administration. Real private-sector economic growth, under the Bush administration, averaged 1.3 percent. Under the Clinton administration, real private-sector GDP growth has averaged 3.2 percent; a very good record and a dramatic improvement over what we have seen previously.

Real business fixed investment. I think one of the best measures of whether an economic plan is successful is what happens to real business fixed investment. We can see that under President Clinton, we have the best rate of increase in real business fixed investment of any President since World War II. If we look at the last 4 years—since the Clinton administration took control, since we passed the 1993 economic plan—we see a dramatic increase in business fixed investment, in fact, the best record that we have seen in decades.

President Clinton delivered on his promise to reduce the deficit—we can all recall he said he would cut it in half. It was \$290 billion in the year before he took office. He has more than met that promise. He has reduced the deficit to \$116 billion, a 60-percent reduction.

That is not the only promise he has delivered on with his economic plan. He said his plan would deliver 8 million new jobs. But instead, we now have over 10 million new jobs created during the Clinton administration.

Let me just turn to one other matter because unemployment is also a very significant measuring point as to how well an economic plan is doing.

Back in December 1992, before Bill Clinton came into office, the unemployment rate in this country was 7.3