

when we can, we see to it that they incur no unnecessary expense in doing so.

Mr. Speaker, I want to commend the gentlewoman from North Carolina [Mrs. CLAYTON] for bringing this to our attention. I want to commend the gentleman from Indiana [Mr. BUYER] and the gentleman from Virginia [Mr. BATEMAN] for allowing this to come to the floor today. We are definitely doing the best thing for those people in uniform.

Mr. DELLUMS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I would simply like to conclude by indicating that I would have liked very much for this matter to have been dealt with in the context of the conference report that accompanied the defense authorization for fiscal year 1998. In that regard, this would, in a few short days perhaps, have been signed into law. But I am pleased we are at least taking this step.

My hope is by the House of Representatives taking this step, we will have sent the appropriate signal to the other body to act with dispatch on this matter that cries out for equity and cries out for action.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BATEMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Indiana [Mr. BUYER].

Mr. BUYER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman of the Subcommittee on Military Readiness for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the legislation to correct these errors with regard to our troops. This is really basically, my colleagues, support-the-troops legislation.

This legislation corrects a problem created earlier this year when, due to an administrative change in Army policy, reservists deployed to Bosnia were forced to pay out of their own pocket to ship their personal goods home at the completion of their tour. Most of the reservists called for the second rotation to Bosnia were affected by this change.

This matter came to the attention of the authorizing Committee on National Security really too late to deal with this issue effectively in the defense bill this year.

I compliment the gentlewoman from North Carolina [Mrs. CLAYTON] for bringing this to everyone's attention. I am disappointed that the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Manpower and Reserve affairs, Ms. Sara Lister, would not have brought this immediately to the Committee on National Security's attention. I know she brought this in response to your inquiry, but I wish she had brought it right to the authorizing committee. Perhaps, if she is listening, she is going to get that warning order.

I urge my colleagues to support the legislation. The troops can be reimbursed in a timely fashion for their

selfless service to their country. I agree with the ranking member that hopefully the Senate will take this up immediately.

Mr. BATEMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, let me add in conclusion my thanks and compliments to the gentlewoman from North Carolina [Mrs. CLAYTON] for having determined that there was this problem and having brought it to our attention in order that we could address the problem, one which definitely needed to be addressed and which I am happy to have cooperated in having the House hopefully pass in the next minute.

I hope also the Senate will take action on this and the President will sign it in order that we can have the authority for these troops to be paid that which they deserve.

Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Virginia [Mr. BATEMAN] that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2796, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

□ 1630

AMTRAK REFORM AND ACCOUNTABILITY ACT OF 1997

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the Senate bill (S. 738) to reform the statutes relating to Amtrak, to authorize appropriations for Amtrak, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

S. 738

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; AMENDMENT OF TITLE 49; TABLE OF SECTIONS.

(a) *SHORT TITLE.*—This Act may be cited as the "Amtrak Reform and Accountability Act of 1997".

(b) *AMENDMENT OF TITLE 49, UNITED STATES CODE.*—Except as otherwise expressly provided, whenever in this Act an amendment or repeal is expressed in terms of an amendment to, or a repeal of, a section or other provision, the reference shall be considered to be made to a section or other provision of title 49, United States Code.

(c) *TABLE OF SECTIONS.*—The table of sections for this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title; amendment of title 49; table of sections.

Sec. 2. Findings.

TITLE I—REFORMS

SUBTITLE A—OPERATIONAL REFORMS

Sec. 101. Basic system.

Sec. 102. Mail, express, and auto-ferry transportation.

Sec. 103. Route and service criteria.

Sec. 104. Additional qualifying routes.

Sec. 105. Transportation requested by States, authorities, and other persons.

Sec. 106. Amtrak commuter.

Sec. 107. Through service in conjunction with intercity bus operations.

Sec. 108. Rail and motor carrier passenger service.

Sec. 109. Passenger choice.

Sec. 110. Application of certain laws.

SUBTITLE B—PROCUREMENT

Sec. 121. Contracting out.

SUBTITLE C—EMPLOYEE PROTECTION REFORMS

Sec. 141. Railway Labor Act Procedures.

Sec. 142. Service discontinuance.

SUBTITLE D—USE OF RAILROAD FACILITIES

Sec. 161. Liability limitation.

Sec. 162. Retention of facilities.

TITLE II—FISCAL ACCOUNTABILITY

Sec. 201. Amtrak financial goals.

Sec. 202. Independent assessment.

Sec. 203. Amtrak Reform Council.

Sec. 204. Sunset trigger.

Sec. 205. Senate procedure for consideration of restructuring and liquidation plans.

Sec. 206. Access to records and accounts.

Sec. 207. Officers' pay.

Sec. 208. Exemption from taxes.

Sec. 209. Limitation on use of tax refund.

TITLE III—AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS

Sec. 301. Authorization of appropriations.

TITLE IV—MISCELLANEOUS

Sec. 401. Status and applicable laws.

Sec. 402. Waste disposal.

Sec. 403. Assistance for upgrading facilities.

Sec. 404. Demonstration of new technology.

Sec. 405. Program master plan for Boston-New York main line.

Sec. 406. Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

Sec. 407. Definitions.

Sec. 408. Northeast Corridor cost dispute.

Sec. 409. Inspector General Act of 1978 amendment.

Sec. 410. Interstate rail compacts.

Sec. 411. Board of Directors.

Sec. 412. Educational participation.

Sec. 413. Report to Congress on Amtrak bankruptcy.

Sec. 414. Amtrak to notify Congress of lobbying relationships.

Sec. 415. Financial powers.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

The Congress finds that—

(1) intercity rail passenger service is an essential component of a national intermodal passenger transportation system;

(2) Amtrak is facing a financial crisis, with growing and substantial debt obligations severely limiting its ability to cover operating costs and jeopardizing its long-term viability;

(3) immediate action is required to improve Amtrak's financial condition if Amtrak is to survive;

(4) all of Amtrak's stakeholders, including labor, management, and the Federal government, must participate in efforts to reduce Amtrak's costs and increase its revenues;

(5) additional flexibility is needed to allow Amtrak to operate in a businesslike manner in order to manage costs and maximize revenues;

(6) Amtrak should ensure that new management flexibility produces cost savings without compromising safety;

(7) Amtrak's management should be held accountable to ensure that all investment by the Federal Government and State governments is used effectively to improve the quality of service and the long-term financial health of Amtrak;

(8) Amtrak and its employees should proceed quickly with proposals to modify collective bargaining agreements to make more efficient use of manpower and to realize cost savings which are necessary to reduce Federal financial assistance;

(9) Amtrak and intercity bus service providers should work cooperatively and develop coordinated intermodal relationships promoting seamless transportation services which enhance travel options and increase operating efficiencies;

(10) Amtrak's Strategic Business Plan calls for the establishment of a dedicated source of capital funding for Amtrak in order to ensure that Amtrak will be able to fulfill the goals of maintaining—

(A) a national passenger rail system; and

(B) that system without Federal operating assistance; and

(11) Federal financial assistance to cover operating losses incurred by Amtrak should be eliminated by the year 2002.

TITLE I—REFORMS

Subtitle A—Operational Reforms

SEC. 101. BASIC SYSTEM.

(a) OPERATION OF BASIC SYSTEM.—(1) Section 24701 is amended to read as follows:

"§24701. National rail passenger transportation system

"Amtrak shall operate a national rail passenger transportation system which ties together existing and emergent regional rail passenger service and other intermodal passenger service."

(2) The item relating to section 24701 in the table of sections of chapter 247 is amended to read as follows:

"24701. National rail passenger transportation system."

(b) IMPROVING RAIL PASSENGER TRANSPORTATION.—Section 24702 and the item relating thereto in the table of sections for chapter 247 are repealed.

(c) DISCONTINUANCE.—Section 24706 is amended—

(1) by striking "90 days" and inserting "180 days" in subsection (a)(1);

(2) by striking "24707(a) or (b) of this title," in subsection (a)(1) and inserting "or discontinuing service over a route,";

(3) by inserting "or assume" after "agree to share" in subsection (a)(1);

(4) by striking "section 24707(a) or (b) of this title" in subsection (a)(2) and inserting "paragraph (1)"; and

(5) by striking "section 24707(a) or (b) of this title" in subsection (b)(1) and inserting "subsection (a)(1)".

(d) COST AND PERFORMANCE REVIEW.—Section 24707 and the item relating thereto in the table of sections for chapter 247 are repealed.

(e) SPECIAL COMMUTER TRANSPORTATION.—Section 24708 and the item relating thereto in the table of sections for chapter 247 are repealed.

(f) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 24312(a)(1) is amended by striking "24701(a)".

SEC. 102. MAIL, EXPRESS, AND AUTO-FERRY TRANSPORTATION.

(a) REPEAL.—Section 24306 is amended—

(1) by striking the last sentence of subsection (a); and

(2) by striking subsection (b) and inserting the following:

"(b) AUTHORITY OF OTHERS TO PROVIDE AUTO-FERRY TRANSPORTATION.—State and local laws and regulations that impair the provision of auto-ferry transportation do not apply to Amtrak or a rail carrier providing auto-ferry transportation. A rail carrier may not refuse to participate with Amtrak in providing auto-ferry transportation because a State or local law or regulation makes the transportation unlawful."

SEC. 103. ROUTE AND SERVICE CRITERIA.

Section 24703 and the item relating thereto in the table of sections for chapter 247 are repealed.

SEC. 104. ADDITIONAL QUALIFYING ROUTES.

Section 24705 and the item relating thereto in the table of sections for chapter 247 are repealed.

SEC. 105. TRANSPORTATION REQUESTED BY STATES, AUTHORITIES, AND OTHER PERSONS.

(a) REPEAL.—Section 24704 and the item relating thereto in the table of sections of chapter 247 are repealed.

(b) STATE, REGIONAL, AND LOCAL COOPERATION.—Section 24101(c)(2) is amended by inserting "separately or in combination," after "and the private sector".

(c) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 24312(a)(1) is amended by striking "or 24704(b)(2)".

SEC. 106. AMTRAK COMMUTER.

(a) REPEAL OF CHAPTER 245.—Chapter 245 and the item relating thereto in the table of chapters for subtitle V of such title, are repealed.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 24301(f) is amended to read as follows:

"(f) TAX EXEMPTION FOR CERTAIN COMMUTER AUTHORITIES.—A commuter authority that was eligible to make a contract with Amtrak Commuter to provide commuter rail passenger transportation but which decided to provide its own rail passenger transportation beginning January 1, 1983, is exempt, effective October 1, 1981, from paying a tax or fee to the same extent Amtrak is exempt."

(c) TRACKAGE RIGHTS NOT AFFECTED.—The repeal of chapter 245 of title 49, United States Code, by subsection (a) of this section is without prejudice to the retention of trackage rights over property owned or leased by commuter authorities.

SEC. 107. THROUGH SERVICE IN CONJUNCTION WITH INTERCITY BUS OPERATIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 24305(a) is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

"(3)(A) Except as provided in subsection (d)(2), Amtrak may enter into a contract with a motor carrier of passengers for the intercity transportation of passengers by motor carrier over regular routes only—

"(i) if the motor carrier is not a public recipient of governmental assistance, as such term is defined in section 13902(b)(8)(A) of this title, other than a recipient of funds under section 5311 of this title;

"(ii) for passengers who have had prior movement by rail or will have subsequent movement by rail; and

"(iii) if the buses, when used in the provision of such transportation, are used exclusively for the transportation of passengers described in clause (ii).

"(B) Subparagraph (A) shall not apply to transportation funded predominantly by a State or local government, or to ticket selling agreements."

(b) POLICY STATEMENT.—Section 24305(d) is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

"(3) Congress encourages Amtrak and motor common carriers of passengers to use the authority conferred in sections 11322 and 14302 of this title for the purpose of providing improved service to the public and economy of operation."

SEC. 108. RAIL AND MOTOR CARRIER PASSENGER SERVICE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law (other than section 24305(a)(3) of title 49, United States Code), Amtrak and motor carriers of passengers are authorized—

(1) to combine or package their respective services and facilities to the public as a means of increasing revenues; and

(2) to coordinate schedules, routes, rates, reservations, and ticketing to provide for enhanced intermodal surface transportation.

(b) REVIEW.—The authority granted by subsection (a) is subject to review by the Surface Transportation Board and may be modified or revoked by the Board if modification or revocation is in the public interest.

SEC. 109. PASSENGER CHOICE.

Federal employees are authorized to travel on Amtrak for official business where total travel

cost from office to office is competitive on a total trip or time basis.

SEC. 110. APPLICATION OF CERTAIN LAWS.

(a) APPLICATION OF FOIA.—Section 24301(e) is amended by adding at the end thereof the following: "Section 552 of title 5, United States Code, applies to Amtrak for any fiscal year in which Amtrak receives a Federal subsidy."

(b) APPLICATION OF FEDERAL PROPERTY AND ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES ACT.—Section 303B(m) of the Federal Property and Administrative Services Act of 1949 (41 U.S.C. 253b(m)) applies to a proposal in the possession or control of Amtrak.

Subtitle B—Procurement

SEC. 121. CONTRACTING OUT.

(a) REPEAL OF BAN ON CONTRACTING OUT.—Section 24312 is amended—

(1) by striking subsection (b);

(2) by striking "(1)" in subsection (a); and

(3) by striking "(2) Wage" in subsection (a) and inserting "(b) WAGE RATES.—Wage".

(b) AMENDMENT OF EXISTING COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT.—

(1) CONTRACTING OUT.—Any collective bargaining agreement entered into between Amtrak and an organization representing Amtrak employees before the date of enactment of this Act is deemed amended to include the language of section 24312(b) of title 49, United States Code, as that section existed on the day before the effective date of the amendments made by subsection (a).

(2) ENFORCEABILITY OF AMENDMENT.—The amendment to any such collective bargaining agreement deemed to be made by paragraph (1) of this subsection is binding on all parties to the agreement and has the same effect as if arrived at by agreement of the parties under the Railway Labor Act.

(c) CONTRACTING-OUT ISSUES TO BE INCLUDED IN NEGOTIATIONS.—Proposals on the subject matter of contracting out work, other than work related to food and beverage service, which results in the layoff of an Amtrak employee—

(1) shall be included in negotiations under section 6 of the Railway Labor Act (45 U.S.C. 156) between Amtrak and an organization representing Amtrak employees, which shall be commenced by—

(A) the date on which labor agreements under negotiation on the date of enactment of this Act may be re-opened; or

(B) November 1, 1999,

whichever is earlier;

(2) may, at the mutual election of Amtrak and an organization representing Amtrak employees, be included in any negotiation in progress under section 6 of the Railway Labor Act (45 U.S.C. 156) on the date of enactment of this Act; and

(3) may not be included in any negotiation in progress under section 6 of the Railway Labor Act (45 U.S.C. 156) on the date of enactment of this Act, unless both Amtrak and the organization representing Amtrak employees agree to include it in the negotiation.

No contract between Amtrak and an organization representing Amtrak employees, that is under negotiation on the date of enactment of this Act, may contain a moratorium that extends more than 5 years from the date of expiration of the last moratorium.

(d) NO INFERENCE.—The amendment made by subsection (a)(1) is without prejudice to the power of Amtrak to contract out the provision of food and beverage services on board Amtrak trains or to contract out work not resulting in the layoff of Amtrak employees.

Subtitle C—Employee Protection Reforms

SEC. 141. RAILWAY LABOR ACT PROCEDURES.

(a) NOTICES.—Notwithstanding any arrangement in effect before the date of the enactment of this Act, notices under section 6 of the Railway Labor Act (45 U.S.C. 156) with respect to all

issues relating to employee protective arrangements and severance benefits which are applicable to employees of Amtrak, including all provisions of Appendix C-2 to the National Railroad Passenger Corporation Agreement, signed July 5, 1973, shall be deemed served and effective on the date which is 45 days after the date of the enactment of this Act. Amtrak, and each affected labor organization representing Amtrak employees, shall promptly supply specific information and proposals with respect to each such notice.

(b) NATIONAL MEDIATION BOARD EFFORTS.—Except as provided in subsection (c), the National Mediation Board shall complete all efforts, with respect to the dispute described in subsection (a), under section 5 of the Railway Labor Act (45 U.S.C. 155) not later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(c) RAILWAY LABOR ACT ARBITRATION.—The parties to the dispute described in subsection (a) may agree to submit the dispute to arbitration under section 7 of the Railway Labor Act (45 U.S.C. 157), and any award resulting therefrom shall be retroactive to the date which is 120 days after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(d) DISPUTE RESOLUTION.—(1) With respect to the dispute described in subsection (a) which—
(A) is unresolved as of the date which is 120 days after the date of the enactment of this Act; and

(B) is not submitted to arbitration as described in subsection (c), Amtrak shall, and the labor organization parties to such dispute shall, within 127 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, each select an individual from the entire roster of arbitrators maintained by the National Mediation Board. Within 134 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the individuals selected under the preceding sentence shall jointly select an individual from such roster to make recommendations with respect to such dispute under this subsection. If the National Mediation Board is not informed of the selection under the preceding sentence 134 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Board shall immediately select such individual.

(2) No individual shall be selected under paragraph (1) who is pecuniarily or otherwise interested in any organization of employees or any railroad.

(3) The compensation of individuals selected under paragraph (1) shall be fixed by the National Mediation Board. The second paragraph of section 10 of the Railway Labor Act shall apply to the expenses of such individuals as if such individuals were members of a board created under such section 10.

(4) If the parties to a dispute described in subsection (a) fail to reach agreement within 150 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the individual selected under paragraph (1) with respect to such dispute shall make recommendations to the parties proposing contract terms to resolve the dispute.

(5) If the parties to a dispute described in subsection (a) fail to reach agreement, no change shall be made by either of the parties in the conditions out of which the dispute arose for 30 days after recommendations are made under paragraph (4).

(6) Section 10 of the Railway Labor Act (45 U.S.C. 160) shall not apply to a dispute described in subsection (a).

(e) NO PRECEDENT FOR FREIGHT.—Nothing in this Act, or in any amendment made by this Act, shall affect the level of protection provided to freight railroad employees and mass transportation employees as it existed on the day before the date of enactment of this Act.

SEC. 142. SERVICE DISCONTINUANCE.

(a) REPEAL.—Section 24706(c) is repealed.

(b) EXISTING CONTRACTS.—Any provision of a contract entered into before the date of the enactment of this Act between Amtrak and a labor organization representing Amtrak employees re-

lating to employee protective arrangements and severance benefits applicable to employees of Amtrak is extinguished, including all provisions of Appendix C-2 to the National Railroad Passenger Corporation Agreement, signed July 5, 1973.

(c) SPECIAL EFFECTIVE DATE.—Subsections (a) and (b) of this section shall take effect 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(d) NONAPPLICATION OF BANKRUPTCY LAW PROVISION.—Section 1172(c) of title 11, United States Code, shall not apply to Amtrak and its employees.

Subtitle D—Use of Railroad Facilities

SEC. 161. LIABILITY LIMITATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 281 is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

“§28103. Limitations on rail passenger transportation liability

“(a) LIMITATIONS.—(1) Notwithstanding any other statutory or common law or public policy, or the nature of the conduct giving rise to damages or liability, in a claim for personal injury to a passenger, death of a passenger, or damage to property of a passenger arising from or in connection with the provision of rail passenger transportation, or from or in connection with any rail passenger transportation operations over or rail passenger transportation use of right-of-way or facilities owned, leased, or maintained by any high-speed railroad authority or operator, any commuter authority or operator, any rail carrier, or any State, punitive damages, to the extent permitted by applicable State law, may be awarded in connection with any such claim only if the plaintiff establishes by clear and convincing evidence that the harm that is the subject of the action was the result of conduct carried out by the defendant with a conscious, flagrant indifference to the rights or safety of others. If, in any case wherein death was caused, the law of the place where the act or omission complained of occurred provides, or has been construed to provide, for damages only punitive in nature, this paragraph shall not apply.

“(2) The aggregate allowable awards to all rail passengers, against all defendants, for all claims, including claims for punitive damages, arising from a single accident or incident, shall not exceed \$200,000,000.

“(b) CONTRACTUAL OBLIGATIONS.—A provider of rail passenger transportation may enter into contracts that allocate financial responsibility for claims.

“(c) MANDATORY COVERAGE.—Amtrak shall maintain a total minimum liability coverage for claims through insurance and self-insurance of at least \$200,000,000 per accident or incident.

“(d) EFFECT ON OTHER LAWS.—This section shall not affect the damages that may be recovered under the Act of April 27, 1908 (45 U.S.C. 51 et seq.; popularly known as the ‘Federal Employers’ Liability Act’) or under any workers compensation Act.

“(e) DEFINITION.—For purposes of this section—

“(1) the term ‘claim’ means a claim made—

“(A) against Amtrak, any high-speed railroad authority or operator, any commuter authority or operator, any rail carrier, or any State; or

“(B) against an officer, employee, affiliate engaged in railroad operations, or agent, of Amtrak, any high-speed railroad authority or operator, any commuter authority or operator, any rail carrier, or any State;

“(2) the term ‘punitive damages’ means damages awarded against any person or entity to punish or deter such person or entity, or others, from engaging in similar behavior in the future; and

“(3) the term ‘rail carrier’ includes a person providing excursion, scenic, or museum train service, and an owner or operator of a privately owned rail passenger car.”

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The table of sections for chapter 281 is amended by adding at the end the following new item:

“28103. Limitations on rail passenger transportation liability.”

SEC. 162. RETENTION OF FACILITIES.

Section 24309(b) is amended by inserting “or on January 1, 1997,” after “1979.”

TITLE II—FISCAL ACCOUNTABILITY

SEC. 201. AMTRAK FINANCIAL GOALS.

Section 24101(d) is amended by adding at the end thereof the following: “Amtrak shall prepare a financial plan to operate within the funding levels authorized by section 24104 of this chapter, including budgetary goals for fiscal years 1998 through 2002. Commencing no later than the fiscal year following the fifth anniversary of the Amtrak Reform and Accountability Act of 1997, Amtrak shall operate without Federal operating grant funds appropriated for its benefit.”

SEC. 202. INDEPENDENT ASSESSMENT.

(a) INITIATION.—Not later than 15 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Transportation shall contract with an entity independent of Amtrak and not in any contractual relationship with Amtrak, and independent of the Department of Transportation, to conduct a complete independent assessment of the financial requirements of Amtrak through fiscal year 2002. The entity shall have demonstrated knowledge about railroad industry accounting requirements, including the uniqueness of the industry and of Surface Transportation Board accounting requirements. The Department of Transportation, Office of Inspector General, shall approve the entity’s statement of work and the award and shall oversee the contract. In carrying out its responsibilities under the preceding sentence, the Inspector General’s Office shall perform such overview and validation or verification of data as may be necessary to assure that the assessment conducted under this subsection meets the requirements of this section.

(b) ASSESSMENT CRITERIA.—The Secretary and Amtrak shall provide to the independent entity estimates of the financial requirements of Amtrak for the period described in subsection (a), using as a base the fiscal year 1997 appropriation levels established by the Congress. The independent assessment shall be based on an objective analysis of Amtrak’s funding needs.

(c) CERTAIN FACTORS TO BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT.—The independent assessment shall take into account all relevant factors, including Amtrak’s—

(1) cost allocation process and procedures;

(2) expenses related to intercity rail passenger service, commuter service, and any other service Amtrak provides;

(3) Strategic Business Plan, including Amtrak’s projected expenses, capital needs, ridership, and revenue forecasts; and

(4) assets and liabilities.

For purposes of paragraph (3), in the capital needs part of its Strategic Business Plan Amtrak shall distinguish between that portion of the capital required for the Northeast Corridor and that required outside the Northeast Corridor, and shall include rolling stock requirements, including capital leases, “state of good repair” requirements, and infrastructure improvements.

(d) BIDDING PRACTICES.—

(1) STUDY.—The independent assessment also shall determine whether, and to what extent, Amtrak has performed each year during the period from 1992 through 1996 services under contract at amounts less than the cost to Amtrak of performing such services with respect to any activity other than the provision of intercity rail passenger transportation, or mail or express transportation. For purposes of this clause, the cost to Amtrak of performing services shall be determined using generally accepted accounting principles for contracting. If identified, such contracts shall be detailed in the report of the independent assessment, as well as the methodology for preparation of bids to reflect Amtrak’s actual cost of performance.

(2) **REFORM.**—If the independent assessment performed under this subparagraph reveals that Amtrak has performed services under contract for an amount less than the cost to Amtrak of performing such services, with respect to any activity other than the provision of intercity rail passenger transportation, or mail or express transportation, then Amtrak shall revise its methodology for preparation of bids to reflect its cost of performance.

(e) **DEADLINE.**—The independent assessment shall be completed not later than 180 days after the contract is awarded, and shall be submitted to the Council established under section 203, the Secretary of Transportation, the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the United States Senate, and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the United States House of Representatives.

SEC. 203. AMTRAK REFORM COUNCIL.

(a) **ESTABLISHMENT.**—There is established an independent commission to be known as the Amtrak Reform Council.

(b) **MEMBERSHIP.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Council shall consist of 11 members, as follows:

(A) The Secretary of Transportation.

(B) Two individuals appointed by the President, of which—

(i) one shall be a representative of a rail labor organization; and

(ii) one shall be a representative of rail management.

(C) Three individuals appointed by the Majority Leader of the United States Senate.

(D) One individual appointed by the Minority Leader of the United States Senate.

(E) Three individuals appointed by the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives.

(F) One individual appointed by the Minority Leader of the United States House of Representatives.

(2) **APPOINTMENT CRITERIA.**—

(A) **TIME FOR INITIAL APPOINTMENTS.**—Appointments under paragraph (1) shall be made within 30 days after the date of enactment of this Act.

(B) **EXPERTISE.**—Individuals appointed under subparagraphs (C) through (F) of paragraph (1)—

(i) may not be employees of the United States; (ii) may not be board members or employees of Amtrak;

(iii) may not be representatives of rail labor organizations or rail management; and

(iv) shall have technical qualifications, professional standing, and demonstrated expertise in the field of corporate management, finance, rail or other transportation operations, labor, economics, or the law, or other areas of expertise relevant to the Council.

(3) **TERM.**—Members shall serve for terms of 5 years. If a vacancy occurs other than by the expiration of a term, the individual appointed to fill the vacancy shall be appointed in the same manner as, and shall serve only for the unexpired portion of the term for which, that individual's predecessor was appointed.

(4) **CHAIRMAN.**—The Council shall elect a chairman from among its membership within 15 days after the earlier of—

(A) the date on which all members of the Council have been appointed under paragraph (2)(A); or

(B) 45 days after the date of enactment of this Act.

(5) **MAJORITY REQUIRED FOR ACTION.**—A majority of the members of the Council present and voting is required for the Council to take action. No person shall be elected chairman of the Council who receives fewer than 5 votes.

(c) **ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT.**—The Secretary of Transportation shall provide such administrative support to the Council as it needs in order to carry out its duties under this section.

(d) **TRAVEL EXPENSES.**—Each member of the Council shall serve without pay, but shall re-

ceive travel expenses, including per diem in lieu of subsistence, in accordance with section 5702 and 5703 of title 5, United States Code.

(e) **MEETINGS.**—Each meeting of the Council, other than a meeting at which proprietary information is to be discussed, shall be open to the public.

(f) **ACCESS TO INFORMATION.**—Amtrak shall make available to the Council all information the Council requires to carry out its duties under this section. The Council shall establish appropriate procedures to ensure against the public disclosure of any information obtained under this subsection that is a trade secret or commercial or financial information that is privileged or confidential.

(g) **DUTIES.**—

(1) **EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATION.**—The Council shall—

(A) evaluate Amtrak's performance; and

(B) make recommendations to Amtrak for achieving further cost containment and productivity improvements, and financial reforms.

(2) **SPECIFIC CONSIDERATIONS.**—In making its evaluation and recommendations under paragraph (1), the Council shall consider all relevant performance factors, including—

(A) Amtrak's operation as a national passenger rail system which provides access to all regions of the country and ties together existing and emerging rail passenger corridors;

(B) appropriate methods for adoption of uniform cost and accounting procedures throughout the Amtrak system, based on generally accepted accounting principles; and

(C) management efficiencies and revenue enhancements, including savings achieved through labor and contracting negotiations.

(3) **MONITOR WORK-RULE SAVINGS.**—If, after January 1, 1997, Amtrak enters into an agreement involving work-rules intended to achieve savings with an organization representing Amtrak employees, then Amtrak shall report quarterly to the Council—

(A) the savings realized as a result of the agreement; and

(B) how the savings are allocated.

(h) **ANNUAL REPORT.**—Each year before the fifth anniversary of the date of enactment of this Act, the Council shall submit to the Congress a report that includes an assessment of—

(1) Amtrak's progress on the resolution of productivity issues; or

(2) the status of those productivity issues, and makes recommendations for improvements and for any changes in law it believes to be necessary or appropriate.

(i) **AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**—There are authorized to be appropriated to the Council such sums as may be necessary to enable the Council to carry out its duties.

SEC. 204. SUNSET TRIGGER.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—If at any time more than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act and implementation of the financial plan referred to in section 24104(d) of title 49, United States Code, as amended by section 201 of this Act, the Amtrak Reform Council finds that—

(1) Amtrak's business performance will prevent it from meeting the financial goals set forth in section 24104(d) of title 49, United States Code, as amended by section 201 of this Act; or

(2) Amtrak will require operating grant funds after the fifth anniversary of the date of enactment of this Act,

then the Council shall immediately notify the President, the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the United States Senate, and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the United States House of Representatives.

(b) **FACTORS CONSIDERED.**—In making a finding under subsection (a), the Council shall take into account—

(1) Amtrak's performance;

(2) the findings of the independent assessment conducted under section 202;

(3) the level of Federal funds made available for carrying out the financial plan referred to in section 24104(d) of title 49, United States Code, as amended by section 201 of this Act; and

(4) Acts of God, national emergencies, and other events beyond the reasonable control of Amtrak.

(c) **ACTION PLAN.**—Within 90 days after the Council makes a finding under subsection (a)—

(1) it shall develop and submit to the Congress an action plan for a restructured and rationalized national intercity rail passenger system; and

(2) Amtrak shall develop and submit to the Congress an action plan for the complete liquidation of Amtrak, after having the plan reviewed by the Inspector General of the Department of Transportation and the General Accounting Office for accuracy and reasonableness.

SEC. 205. SENATE PROCEDURE FOR CONSIDERATION OF RESTRUCTURING AND LIQUIDATION PLANS.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—If, within 90 days (not counting any day on which either House is not in session) after a restructuring plan is submitted to the House of Representatives and the Senate by the Amtrak Reform Council under section 204 of this Act, an implementing Act with respect to a restructuring plan (without regard to whether it is the plan submitted) has not been passed by the Congress, then a liquidation disapproval resolution shall be introduced in the Senate by the Majority Leader of the Senate, for himself and the Minority Leader of the Senate, or by Members of the Senate designated by the Majority Leader and Minority Leader of the Senate. The liquidation disapproval resolution shall be held at the desk at the request of the Presiding Officer.

(b) **CONSIDERATION IN THE SENATE.**—

(1) **REFERRAL AND REPORTING.**—A liquidation disapproval resolution introduced in the Senate shall be placed directly and immediately on the Calendar.

(2) **IMPLEMENTING RESOLUTION FROM HOUSE.**—When the Senate receives from the House of Representatives a liquidation disapproval resolution, the resolution shall not be referred to committee and shall be placed on the Calendar.

(3) **CONSIDERATION OF SINGLE LIQUIDATION DISAPPROVAL RESOLUTION.**—After the Senate has proceeded to the consideration of a liquidation disapproval resolution under this subsection, then no other liquidation disapproval resolution originating in that same House shall be subject to the procedures set forth in this section.

(4) **AMENDMENTS.**—No amendment to the resolution is in order except an amendment that is relevant to liquidation of Amtrak. Consideration of the resolution for amendment shall not exceed one hour excluding time for recorded votes and quorum calls. No amendment shall be subject to further amendment, except for perfecting amendments.

(5) **MOTION NONDEBATABLE.**—A motion to proceed to consideration of a liquidation disapproval resolution under this subsection shall not be debatable. It shall not be in order to move to reconsider the vote by which the motion to proceed was adopted or rejected, although subsequent motions to proceed may be made under this paragraph.

(6) **LIMIT ON CONSIDERATION.**—

(A) After no more than 20 hours of consideration of a liquidation disapproval resolution, the Senate shall proceed, without intervening action or debate (except as permitted under paragraph (9)), to vote on the final disposition thereof to the exclusion of all amendments not then pending and to the exclusion of all motions, except a motion to reconsider or table.

(B) The time for debate on the liquidation disapproval resolution shall be equally divided between the Majority Leader and the Minority Leader or their designees.

(7) **DEBATE OF AMENDMENTS.**—Debate on any amendment to a liquidation disapproval resolution shall be limited to one hour, equally divided and controlled by the Senator proposing the amendment and the majority manager, unless the majority manager is in favor of the amendment, in which case the minority manager shall be in control of the time in opposition.

(8) **NO MOTION TO RECOMMIT.**—A motion to recommit a liquidation disapproval resolution shall not be in order.

(9) **DISPOSITION OF SENATE RESOLUTION.**—If the Senate has read for the third time a liquidation disapproval resolution that originated in the Senate, then it shall be in order at any time thereafter to move to proceed to the consideration of a liquidation disapproval resolution for the same special message received from the House of Representatives and placed on the Calendar pursuant to paragraph (2), strike all after the enacting clause, substitute the text of the Senate liquidation disapproval resolution, agree to the Senate amendment, and vote on final disposition of the House liquidation disapproval resolution, all without any intervening action or debate.

(10) **CONSIDERATION OF HOUSE MESSAGE.**—Consideration in the Senate of all motions, amendments, or appeals necessary to dispose of a message from the House of Representatives on a liquidation disapproval resolution shall be limited to not more than 4 hours. Debate on each motion or amendment shall be limited to 30 minutes. Debate on any appeal or point of order that is submitted in connection with the disposition of the House message shall be limited to 20 minutes. Any time for debate shall be equally divided and controlled by the proponent and the majority manager, unless the majority manager is a proponent of the motion, amendment, appeal, or point of order, in which case the minority manager shall be in control of the time in opposition.

(c) **CONSIDERATION IN CONFERENCE.**—

(1) **CONVENING OF CONFERENCE.**—In the case of disagreement between the two Houses of Congress with respect to a liquidation disapproval resolution passed by both Houses, conferees should be promptly appointed and a conference promptly convened, if necessary.

(2) **SENATE CONSIDERATION.**—Consideration in the Senate of the conference report and any amendments in disagreement on a liquidation disapproval resolution shall be limited to not more than 4 hours equally divided and controlled by the Majority Leader and the Minority Leader or their designees. A motion to recommit the conference report is not in order.

(d) **DEFINITIONS.**—For purposes of this section—

(1) **LIQUIDATION DISAPPROVAL RESOLUTION.**—The term “liquidation disapproval resolution” means only a resolution of either House of Congress which is introduced as provided in subsection (a) with respect to the liquidation of Amtrak.

(2) **RESTRUCTURING PLAN.**—The term “restructuring plan” means a plan to provide for a restructured and rationalized national intercity rail passenger transportation system.

(e) **RULES OF SENATE.**—This section is enacted by the Congress—

(1) as an exercise of the rulemaking power of the Senate, and as such they are deemed a part of the rules of the Senate, but applicable only with respect to the procedure to be followed in the Senate in the case of a liquidation disapproval resolution; and they supersede other rules only to the extent that they are inconsistent therewith; and

(2) with full recognition of the constitutional right of the Senate to change the rules (so far as relating to the procedure of the Senate) at any time, in the same manner and to the same extent as in the case of any other rule of the Senate.

SEC. 206. ACCESS TO RECORDS AND ACCOUNTS.

Section 24315 is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(h) **ACCESS TO RECORDS AND ACCOUNTS.**—A State shall have access to Amtrak’s records, accounts, and other necessary documents used to determine the amount of any payment to Amtrak required of the State.”.

SEC. 207. OFFICERS’ PAY.

Section 24303(b) is amended by adding at the end the following: “The preceding sentence shall not apply for any fiscal year for which no Federal assistance is provided to Amtrak.”.

SEC. 208. EXEMPTION FROM TAXES.

Section 24301(l)(1) is amended—

(1) by striking so much as precedes “exempt from a tax” and inserting the following:

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Amtrak, a rail carrier subsidiary of Amtrak, and any passenger or other customer of Amtrak or such subsidiary, are”;

(2) by striking “tax or fee imposed” and all that follows through “levied on it” and inserting “tax, fee, head charge, or other charge, imposed or levied by a State, political subdivision, or local taxing authority on Amtrak, a rail carrier subsidiary of Amtrak, or on persons traveling in intercity rail passenger transportation or on mail or express transportation provided by Amtrak or such a subsidiary, or on the carriage of such persons, mail, or express, or on the sale of any such transportation, or on the gross receipts derived therefrom”; and

(3) by amending the last sentence thereof to read as follows: “In the case of a tax or fee that Amtrak was required to pay as of September 10, 1982, Amtrak is not exempt from such tax or fee if it was assessed before April 1, 1997.”.

SEC. 209. LIMITATION ON USE OF TAX REFUND.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Amtrak may not use any amount received under section 977 of the Taxpayer Relief Act of 1997—

(1) for any purpose other than making payments to non-Amtrak States (pursuant to section 977(c) of that Act), or the financing of qualified expenses (as that term is defined in section 977(e)(1) of that Act); or

(2) to offset other amounts used for any purpose other than the financing of such expenses.

(b) **REPORT BY ARC.**—The Amtrak Reform Council shall report quarterly to the Congress on the use of amounts received by Amtrak under section 977 of the Taxpayer Relief Act of 1997.

TITLE III—AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS

SEC. 301. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

(a) **AMENDMENT.**—Section 24104(a) is amended to read as follows:

“(a) **IN GENERAL.**—There are authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary of Transportation—

“(1) \$1,138,000,000 for fiscal year 1998;

“(2) \$1,058,000,000 for fiscal year 1999;

“(3) \$1,023,000,000 for fiscal year 2000;

“(4) \$989,000,000 for fiscal year 2001; and

“(5) \$955,000,000 for fiscal year 2002,

for the benefit of Amtrak for capital expenditures under chapters 243, 247, and 249 of this title, operating expenses, and payments described in subsection (c)(1)(A) through (C). In fiscal years following the fifth anniversary of the enactment of the Amtrak Reform and Accountability Act of 1997 no funds authorized for Amtrak shall be used for operating expenses other than those prescribed for tax liabilities under section 3221 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 that are more than the amount needed for benefits of individuals who retire from Amtrak and for their beneficiaries.”.

(b) **AMTRAK REFORM LEGISLATION.**—This Act constitutes Amtrak reform legislation within the meaning of section 977(f)(1) of the Taxpayer Relief Act of 1997.

TITLE IV—MISCELLANEOUS

SEC. 401. STATUS AND APPLICABLE LAWS.

Section 24301 is amended—

(1) by striking “rail carrier under section 10102” in subsection (a)(1) and inserting “railroad carrier under section 20102(2) and chapters 261 and 281”; and

(2) by amending subsection (c) to read as follows:

“(c) **APPLICATION OF SUBTITLE IV.**—Subtitle IV of this title shall not apply to Amtrak, except for sections 11301, 11322(a), 11502, and 11706. Notwithstanding the preceding sentence, Amtrak shall continue to be considered an employer under the Railroad Retirement Act of 1974, the Railroad Unemployment Insurance Act, and the Railroad Retirement Tax Act.”.

SEC. 402. WASTE DISPOSAL.

Section 24301(m)(1)(A) is amended by striking “1996” and inserting “2001”.

SEC. 403. ASSISTANCE FOR UPGRADING FACILITIES.

Section 24310 and the item relating thereto in the table of sections for chapter 243 are repealed.

SEC. 404. DEMONSTRATION OF NEW TECHNOLOGY.

Section 24310 and the item relating thereto in the table of sections for chapter 243 are repealed.

SEC. 405. PROGRAM MASTER PLAN FOR BOSTON-NEW YORK MAIN LINE.

(a) **REPEAL.**—Section 24903 is repealed and the table of sections for chapter 249 is amended by striking the item relating to that section.

(b) **CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.**—

(1) Section 24902 is amended—

(A) by striking subsections (a), (c), and (d) and redesignating subsection (b) as subsection (a) and subsections (e) through (m) as subsections (b) through (j), respectively; and

(B) in subsection (j), as so redesignated by subparagraph (A) of this paragraph, by striking “(m)”.

(2) Section 24904(a) is amended—

(A) by inserting “and” at the end of paragraph (6);

(B) by striking “; and” at the end of paragraph (7) and inserting a period; and

(C) by striking paragraph (8).

SEC. 406. AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT OF 1990.

(a) **APPLICATION TO AMTRAK.**—

(1) **ACCESS IMPROVEMENTS AT CERTAIN SHARED STATIONS.**—Amtrak is responsible for its share, if any, of the costs of accessibility improvements required by the Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990 at any station jointly used by Amtrak and a commuter authority.

(2) **CERTAIN REQUIREMENTS NOT TO APPLY UNTIL 1998.**—Amtrak shall not be subject to any requirement under subsection (a)(1), (a)(3), or (e)(2) of section 242 of the Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12162) until January 1, 1998.

(b) **CONFORMING AMENDMENT.**—Section 24307 is amended—

(1) by striking subsection (b); and

(2) by redesignating subsection (c) as subsection (b).

SEC. 407. DEFINITIONS.

Section 24102 is amended—

(1) by striking paragraphs (2) and (11);

(2) by redesignating paragraphs (3) through (10) as paragraphs (2) through (9), respectively; and

(3) by inserting “, including a unit of State or local government,” after “means a person” in paragraph (7), as so redesignated.

SEC. 408. NORTHEAST CORRIDOR COST DISPUTE.

Section 1163 of the Northeast Rail Service Act of 1981 (45 U.S.C. 1111) is repealed.

SEC. 409. INSPECTOR GENERAL ACT OF 1978 AMENDMENT.

(a) **AMENDMENT.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Section 8G(a)(2) of the Inspector General Act of 1978 (5 U.S.C. App.) is amended by striking “Amtrak.”.

(2) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—The amendment made by paragraph (1) shall take effect at the beginning of the first fiscal year after a fiscal year for which Amtrak receives no Federal subsidy.

(b) **AMTRAK NOT FEDERAL ENTITY.**—Amtrak shall not be considered a Federal entity for purposes of the Inspector General Act of 1978. The

preceding sentence shall apply for any fiscal year for which Amtrak receives no Federal subsidy.

(c) **FEDERAL SUBSIDY.**—

(1) **ASSESSMENT.**—In any fiscal year for which Amtrak requests Federal assistance, the Inspector General of the Department of Transportation shall review Amtrak's operations and conduct an assessment similar to the assessment required by section 202(a). The Inspector General shall report the results of the review and assessment to—

(A) the President of Amtrak;

(B) the Secretary of Transportation;

(C) the United States Senate Committee on Appropriations;

(D) the United States Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation;

(E) the United States House of Representatives Committee on Appropriations; and

(F) the United States House of Representatives Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

(2) **REPORT.**—The report shall be submitted, to the extent practicable, before any such committee reports legislation authorizing or appropriating funds for Amtrak for capital acquisition, development, or operating expenses.

(3) **SPECIAL EFFECTIVE DATE.**—This subsection takes effect 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act.

SEC. 410. INTERSTATE RAIL COMPACTS.

(a) **CONSENT TO COMPACTS.**—Congress grants consent to States with an interest in a specific form, route, or corridor of intercity passenger rail service (including high speed rail service) to enter into interstate compacts to promote the provision of the service, including—

(1) retaining an existing service or commencing a new service;

(2) assembling rights-of-way; and

(3) performing capital improvements, including—

(A) the construction and rehabilitation of maintenance facilities;

(B) the purchase of locomotives; and

(C) operational improvements, including communications, signals, and other systems.

(b) **FINANCING.**—An interstate compact established by States under subsection (a) may provide that, in order to carry out the compact, the States may—

(1) accept contributions from a unit of State or local government or a person;

(2) use any Federal or State funds made available for intercity passenger rail service (except funds made available for Amtrak);

(3) on such terms and conditions as the States consider advisable—

(A) borrow money on a short-term basis and issue notes for the borrowing; and

(B) issue bonds; and

(4) obtain financing by other means permitted under Federal or State law.

SEC. 411. BOARD OF DIRECTORS.

(a) **AMENDMENT.**—Section 24302 is amended to read as follows:

“§24302. Board of Directors

“(a) **REFORM BOARD.**—

“(1) **ESTABLISHMENT AND DUTIES.**—The Reform Board described in paragraph (2) shall assume the responsibilities of the Board of Directors of Amtrak by March 31, 1998, or as soon thereafter as at least 4 members have been appointed and qualified. The Board appointed under prior law shall be abolished when the Reform Board assumes such responsibilities.

“(2) **MEMBERSHIP.**—(A)(i) The Reform Board shall consist of 7 voting members appointed by the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, for a term of 5 years.

“(ii) Notwithstanding clause (i), if the Secretary of Transportation is appointed to the Reform Board, such appointment shall not be subject to the advice and consent of the Senate. If appointed, the Secretary may be represented at Board meetings by his designee.

“(B) In selecting the individuals described in subparagraph (A) for nominations for appointments to the Reform Board, the President should consult with the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the minority leader of the House of Representatives, the majority leader of the Senate, and the minority leader of the Senate.

“(C) Appointments under subparagraph (A) shall be made from among individuals who—

“(i) have technical qualification, professional standing, and demonstrated expertise in the fields of transportation or corporate or financial management;

“(ii) are not representatives of rail labor or rail management; and

“(iii) in the case of 6 of the 7 individuals selected, are not employees of Amtrak or of the United States.

“(D) The President of Amtrak shall serve as an ex officio, nonvoting member of the Reform Board.

“(3) **CONFIRMATION PROCEDURE IN SENATE.**—

“(A) This paragraph is enacted by the Congress—

“(i) as an exercise of the rulemaking power of the Senate, and as such it is deemed a part of the rules of the Senate, but applicable only with respect to the procedure to be followed in the Senate in the case of a motion to discharge; and it supersedes other rules only to the extent that it is inconsistent therewith; and

“(ii) with full recognition of the constitutional right of the Senate to change the rules (so far as relating to the procedure of the Senate) at any time, in the same manner and to the same extent as in the case of any other rule of the Senate.

“(B) If, by the first day of June on which the Senate is in session after a nomination is submitted to the Senate under this section, the committee to which the nomination was referred has not reported the nomination, then it shall be discharged from further consideration of the nomination and the nomination shall be placed on the Executive Calendar.

“(C) It shall be in order at any time thereafter to move to proceed to the consideration of the nomination without any intervening action or debate.

“(D) After no more than 10 hours of debate on the nomination, which shall be evenly divided between, and controlled by, the Majority Leader and the Minority Leader, the Senate shall proceed without intervening action to vote on the nomination.

“(b) **BOARD OF DIRECTORS.**—Five years after the establishment of the Reform Board under subsection (a), a Board of Directors shall be selected—

“(1) if Amtrak has, during the then current fiscal year, received Federal assistance, in accordance with the procedures set forth in subsection (a)(2); or

“(2) if Amtrak has not, during the then current fiscal year, received Federal assistance, pursuant to bylaws adopted by the Reform Board (which shall provide for employee representation), and the Reform Board shall be dissolved.

“(c) **AUTHORITY TO RECOMMEND PLAN.**—The Reform Board shall have the authority to recommend to the Congress a plan to implement the recommendations of the 1997 Working Group on Inter-City Rail regarding the transfer of Amtrak's infrastructure assets and responsibilities to a new separately governed corporation.”

(b) **EFFECT ON AUTHORIZATIONS.**—If the Reform Board has not assumed the responsibilities of the Board of Directors of Amtrak before July 1, 1998, all provisions authorizing appropriations under the amendments made by section 301(a) of this Act for a fiscal year after fiscal year 1998 shall cease to be effective. The preceding sentence shall have no effect on funds provided to Amtrak pursuant to section 977 of the Taxpayer Relief Act of 1997.

SEC. 412. EDUCATIONAL PARTICIPATION.

Amtrak shall participate in educational efforts with elementary and secondary schools to

inform students on the advantages of rail travel and the need for rail safety.

SEC. 413. REPORT TO CONGRESS ON AMTRAK BANKRUPTCY.

Within 120 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General shall submit a report identifying financial and other issues associated with an Amtrak bankruptcy to the United States Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation and to the United States House of Representatives Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. The report shall include an analysis of the implications of such a bankruptcy on the Federal government, Amtrak's creditors, and the Railroad Retirement System.

SEC. 414. AMTRAK TO NOTIFY CONGRESS OF LOBBYING RELATIONSHIPS.

If, at any time, during a fiscal year in which Amtrak receives Federal assistance, Amtrak enters into a consulting contract or similar arrangement, or a contract for lobbying, with a lobbying firm, an individual who is a lobbyist, or who is affiliated with a lobbying firm, as those terms are defined in section 3 of the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995 (2 U.S.C. 1602), Amtrak shall notify the United States Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, and the United States House of Representatives Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of—

(1) the name of the individual or firm involved;

(2) the purpose of the contract or arrangement; and

(3) the amount and nature of Amtrak's financial obligation under the contract.

This section applies only to contracts, renewals or extensions of contracts, or arrangements entered into after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 415. FINANCIAL POWERS.

(a) **CAPITALIZATION.**—(1) Section 24304 is amended to read as follows:

“§24304. Employee stock ownership plans

“In issuing stock pursuant to applicable corporate law, Amtrak is encouraged to include employee stock ownership plans.”

(2) The item relating to section 24304 in the table of sections of chapter 243 is amended to read as follows:

“24304. Employee stock ownership plans.”

(b) **REDEMPTION OF COMMON STOCK.**—Amtrak shall, before October 1, 2002, redeem all common stock previously issued, for the fair market value of such stock.

(c) **ELIMINATION OF LIQUIDATION PREFERENCE AND VOTING RIGHTS OF PREFERRED STOCK.**—(1)(A) Preferred stock of Amtrak held by the Secretary of Transportation shall confer no liquidation preference.

(B) Subparagraph (A) shall take effect 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(2)(A) Preferred stock of Amtrak held by the Secretary of Transportation shall confer no voting rights.

(B) Subparagraph (A) shall take effect 60 days after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(d) **STATUS AND APPLICABLE LAWS.**—(1) Section 24301(a)(3) is amended by inserting “, and shall not be subject to title 31” after “United States Government”.

(2) Section 9101(2) of title 31, United States Code, relating to Government corporations, is amended by striking subparagraph (A) and redesignating subparagraphs (B) through (L) as subparagraphs (A) through (K), respectively.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. SHUSTER] and the gentleman from Minnesota [Mr. OBERSTAR] each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. SHUSTER].

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, at long last we have an Amtrak reform bill here on the floor which has strong bipartisan support. It is a bill which has the reforms in it which are so necessary. It is a bill which provides for the board, which is the creation of a new board which is constitutional and which has the degree of independence necessary to make the tough decisions. It provides for the management to be able to make decisions with regard to the route configuration. Indeed, it gives Amtrak a fighting chance to succeed and survive.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all of our colleagues to support this measure.

Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 738, as amended.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of S. 738, the Amtrak Reform and Accountability Act of 1997.

Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased that we have been able to reach a bipartisan agreement on an amendment to S. 738. Over the past 24 hours, we have been able to reach consensus with our colleagues on the other side of the aisle on the issue of the Amtrak board of directors. This amendment will provide Amtrak with the reforms it so badly needs, as well as release of the \$2.3 billion in capital funds that were provided in the Taxpayer Relief Act.

The amendment adopts the basic principles and reforms of S. 738, the bill passed by the Senate last Friday by unanimous consent, and makes limited but important changes that will ensure successful implementation of long overdue Amtrak reforms.

This amendment contains the labor, liability, and contracting-out provisions that were included in the Senate bill with no changes.

I am pleased that the reforms in this amendment will allow Amtrak, for the first time in its 26-year History, to operate more like a business and cut costs.

On the issue of labor protection, the Senate bill contains a provision that is almost identical to reforms that were included in the House bill, H.R. 2247. The provision will repeal the statutory guarantee that Amtrak provide up to 6 years of labor protection to any employee who is laid off due to a route elimination or frequency reduction to below three times per week. This issue would be sent to collective bargaining, under a 180-day accelerated bargaining process.

The current ban on contracting out any work other than food and beverage service if it would result in the layoff of a single employee would also be repealed in the Senate bill. This issue would be sent to collective bargaining, but would not be negotiable until the next round of contract negotiations, unless the parties mutually agreed to take it up before then.

The Senate bill also provides for a global cap of \$200 million on tort liability for death or injury to a passenger, or damage to property of a passenger. It also includes a requirement that Amtrak maintain insurance of at least \$200 million.

Again, on these important issues . . . labor protection, liability and contracting out . . . we are accepting the Senate compromise and making no change to it.

The one significant departure from the Senate bill in this amendment relates to the board of directors. The House amendment would replace the existing board with a new, 7-member

reform board to be appointed by the President in consultation with House and Senate majority and minority leadership. New members would be required to have expertise in transportation or corporate or financial management.

The purpose of this provision is to provide a fresh start for Amtrak, and to ensure that only qualified professionals are permitted to serve on the board of directors. The amendment also allows the President to select the Secretary of Transportation as a board member. It also designates the president of Amtrak as an ex-officio, non-voting member of the board.

Mr. Speaker, these changes to Amtrak's board bill are necessary to allow the Senate-passed reforms to work.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that the Senate bill as modified by this amendment provides meaningful reform of Amtrak that will go a long way toward restoring financial viability and improving rail passenger service. It will also release the \$2.3 billion that was provided in the Taxpayer Relief Act, allowing Amtrak to make much-needed capital investments.

I urge a "yes" vote on S. 738, as amended.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. OBERSTAR. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, the bill before us represents a compromise on Amtrak which I urge my colleagues on this side of the aisle to support, and which I say they can comfortably support. It is a compromise in which both sides have satisfied their most important objectives. While we have held divergent views on various aspects of this issue, we have had a common goal, that is, to ensure the survival of Amtrak. If we do not pass reform legislation before the end of the session, Amtrak's future will be in doubt.

Passage of this reform legislation is necessary for Amtrak to gain access to \$2.3 billion for capital improvements made available by the tax reform bill. Equally important, in December Amtrak must go to its bankers for renewal of a line of credit which it needs to meet its daily operating expenses. If the bankers should learn that the \$2.3 billion capital funding is still in doubt, they may be unwilling to renew the line of credit.

Our common goal of ensuring the survival of Amtrak could have been achieved earlier. We had differences. We have worked out those differences.

Our Republican colleagues on the committee wanted changes in the constitution of the board of Amtrak directors. We have accommodated those changes. We have worked them out. We reached agreement on a process for reforming the board of directors. Under this process, the directors will be appointed in a manner which is fair to the men and women of the Amtrak work force and which is fair to the American public which owns Amtrak through the Department of Transportation.

The manner of selecting the board preserves the constitutional authority of the President and of the Congress. In

addition, we have developed a selection process that ensures that there will be an orderly transition; specifically, that the old board will not be terminated until the new board is ready to assume its responsibilities. The compromise also assures that the Secretary of Transportation who represents the public as owner of Amtrak may, I emphasize may, continue to serve on the board, and that the president of Amtrak will continue to participate in the board process, but not as a voting member.

Mr. Speaker, I want to emphasize that accepting this compromise does not mean that on my part I am dissatisfied in any way with the existing board. In my opinion, they have done an outstanding job of guiding Amtrak to make the best possible business decisions with limited resources available. I especially commend the board for their negotiations with the BMW which produced an agreement which is fair to workers and protects Amtrak's financial interests.

The bill does not prohibit the President from reappointing any member of the existing board to the new board. That possibility remains open. In fact, I believe that reappointment of some members would have the desirable effect of ensuring continuity.

Under the bill before us, Amtrak would have a board of 7 Members appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate. In making the selections, the President would consult with the majority and minority leadership of the House and the Senate. However, neither the majority nor the minority would have the right to exclusive consultation for any specific seat or number of seats. The board Members will be individuals with technical qualifications, professional standing, and demonstrated expertise in transportation or corporate or financial management, and the president, as I said a moment ago, would be a nonvoting member of the board.

Mr. Speaker, adopting this bill will end the uncertainty that has clouded Amtrak's future for the past 3 years. Amtrak will get the capital it needs to modernize. It will be able to continue playing its vital role in our national transportation system.

Mr. Speaker, it has been a long and difficult journey, but we have reached a point where we can see the end of the journey. I want to thank my colleague, the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. SHUSTER], the chairman of our committee, for sticking with it and for working with us to achieve an acceptable outcome.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from South Dakota [Mr. THUNE].

Mr. THUNE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding, and I also want to thank him for helping correct a shortcoming in the Senate bill that emerged from there with respect to

those States that are not currently served by Amtrak. There was a provision in the Senate bill which has been corrected over here, and I appreciate the chairman's help in correcting that, which would allow those States who are not currently served by Amtrak to also be able to access the \$2.3 billion, and there has been a set-aside of 1 percent.

I would further add that we had prepared an amendment at one point that would address that and allow those States that are not served by Amtrak to find some uses for the funds that have been set aside, and I would appreciate the chairman of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure as well as the chairman of the House Committee on Ways and Means to work with me to find a method in which we can address that shortcoming in this particular bill. I look forward to doing that, and I thank the distinguished chairman for yielding.

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. OBERSTAR. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from West Virginia [Mr. WISE].

Mr. WISE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, this is a very good moment, a very good day, and there are a lot of thanks to go around, obviously to the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. SHUSTER] for bringing this bill to the floor and for his efforts to reach a compromise. A lot of discussions have taken place over the last 24 hours, certainly thanks go to the ranking member, the gentleman from Minnesota [Mr. OBERSTAR], who has steered our side and held us firm and has had his hand firmly on the throttle as we moved forward.

I also think some thanks are due to a lot of Members, too many to name, but Republican and Democrat alike, on and off the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, who worked very hard on this. Thanks go to the gentleman from New York [Mr. SOLOMON], the chairman of the Committee on Rules, who has made sure and stressed continually the need to do something about Amtrak.

I would also like to recognize the board of directors of Amtrak, the present board of directors, who have worked tirelessly not only in resolving labor matters prior to this, but also in working to fashion this bill and to make sure that we were aware of all of the ramifications of our decision. I would particularly like to thank our former colleague, the Governor of Delaware, Tom Carper, who has been constantly on the phone, constantly working as a member of the board, but also one very devoted to making sure Amtrak not only survives but thrives. Also, of course, the Secretary of Transportation, Rodney Slater, who has been very active as well.

Mr. Speaker, this is a compromise, and yesterday when we were here on

the floor, I was perhaps most vocal in saying that if something was not done within the next 24 hours the chance was that Amtrak would not survive as we know it and that Congress had to act before Congress goes home tonight or tomorrow.

The good news is that this compromise has been achieved because of the good efforts of everyone involved, Republican and Democrat alike, as well as the administration. It deals with the previously controversial areas of legal liability for Amtrak. People came to the table and reached agreement. We have resolved issues dealing with labor, and labor has put on the table and management has put on the table certain compromises and concessions which have been made. And it deals with the controversial area of the new board of directors.

So all of the controversial areas have been worked out: the legal liability of Amtrak, labor issues, and the new board of directors.

What does this compromise permit to happen now? Most significantly, passage of this bill means that Amtrak, in December, can go to the banks with a new authorization and able to extend their line of credit to continue operating and to become viable. More significantly than that, passage of this reform legislation means that Amtrak can begin drawing down \$2.3 billion worth of capital for capital investment purposes, for instance, improving the new high-speed corridor in the Northeast and buying high-speed locomotives.

So what Amtrak can do is, A, extend its line of credit and, B, begin drawing down \$2.3 billion for capital investment. Now Amtrak begins restructuring itself, and hopefully to become the viable instrument that we all want.

The good news is that whether one rides the Metroliner, the Cardinal or the Capital Limited in West Virginia, the Texas Eagle or wherever, all of these lines now have a future and have a much better promise ahead of them than what existed prior to this Congress acting. Amtrak now has a future, and it is because of the hard work of a lot of the men and women in this body on both sides of the aisle.

Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleagues for the efforts that have been made, and I urge quick passage of this bill.

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to add a technical modification on page 25, line 14, before the word "(A) date" add the word "the."

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the original motion is withdrawn, and the gentleman from Pennsylvania is recognized for a new motion.

There was no objection.

The SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the Senate bill (S. 738) to reform the statutes relating to Amtrak, to authorize appropriations for Amtrak, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the Senate bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. For the information of the Members, the Clerk will report the modification of the motion.

The Clerk read as follows:

Page 25, line 14 of the proposed amendment, insert "(A) the" before "date."

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. SHUSTER] and the gentleman from Minnesota [Mr. OBERSTAR] each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. SHUSTER].

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentleman from Delaware [Mr. CASTLE].

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time.

I congratulate all who had anything to do with putting this together, particularly the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. SHUSTER] Just 24 hours ago, it was very dark as far as the future of Amtrak was concerned, and a lot of us were pleading to sit down and see if this could be worked out.

A lot of individuals undertook to do that, and that is in the best interests of this country. We have resolved the problems of the labor issues, the problems of the legal liability issues, the problems of the board issues that were so important. Hopefully now, with the release of the capital improvement money as well as what we are doing in this reauthorization, Amtrak can become self-sufficient once and for all by the year 2002.

We must improve passenger rail service. We are at the heart of it in Wilmington, DE. It is of vital importance to us. Our Governor is very involved, is on this board. But I think we have an obligation to make passenger rail service in the United States of America as great as our highway system is, our air system, which is the greatest in the world. It is going to take a lot of work to do it, but we have set the stage so that that can be done. So everybody that had anything to do with the resolution of this, I thank my colleagues and the country thanks to you, and we will see the benefit that will come from it.

Mr. OBERSTAR. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Maryland [Mr. CARDIN].

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. Speaker, let me thank my friend, the gentleman from Minnesota [Mr. OBERSTAR], for yielding me this time, and really congratulate the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. SHUSTER] and the ranking member for bringing this legislation forward.

As the gentleman from Delaware [Mr. CASTLE] pointed out, this has been a tough battle. We have had differences as to what the reform should look like and what should be included in it, and at jeopardy was the life of Amtrak. It has been a pleasure to work with my colleague, the gentleman from Delaware [Mr. CASTLE] on the legislation

initially to provide for the authorization for the \$2.3 billion, and to work with the committee.

At stake in the passage of this bill literally is the light passenger rail service in the United States. That is important to all regions of this country. In the Northeast we are particularly concerned about the high-speed rail and the implementation of high-speed rail. This legislation provides for the necessary reform of Amtrak.

The chairman of the committee, the gentleman from Pennsylvania, [Mr. SHUSTER], and the ranking member, the gentleman from Minnesota [Mr. OBERSTAR], have negotiated very well with the other body, with the administration, and have now brought forward legislation that can pass both bodies and be signed by the President. That is a major accomplishment and one just 24 hours ago many of us thought would not be possible.

I really want to applaud the efforts of all involved. We are now at the threshold really of providing the congressional program so that Amtrak can move into the next century, they can be an efficient passenger rail service for our Nation, providing a service that is critical to all regions of our Nation, and I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from New York [Mr. SOLOMON], the distinguished chairman of the Committee on Rules.

□ 1645

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me the time.

Mr. Speaker, I just want to say, when people really put their feet to the grindstone, we get things done. I just want to commend the chairman, the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. SHUSTER], and the ranking member, the gentleman from Minnesota [Mr. OBERSTAR], and the gentleman from West Virginia [Mr. WISE], because had the pressure not been kept on, we would not have saved Amtrak.

Amtrak will be saved by this legislation, in my opinion. It means so much to my district in the Hudson Valley. I just truly want to thank the gentlemen, because if they had not persevered, it would not have happened. I thank the gentlemen so much.

Mr. OBERSTAR. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New York [Mr. NADLER].

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to support the Amtrak authorization legislation before us. This is not the be all and end all that will save intercity passenger rail as we know it forever, but it does save Amtrak at least for the time being.

This legislation allows \$2.3 billion that was previously appropriated to be invested in Amtrak. That money is vital for Amtrak's survival. I am especially pleased that a conclusion has been reached to this impasse on this legislation, since my district contains

Penn Station in New York City, the largest Amtrak station in this country.

Amtrak is not only vital to intercity passengers, it is also the tracks in the Northeast corridor which carry commuter trains into New York City. These commuter trains bring millions of people into and out of New York City and Philadelphia and other cities in the Northeast corridor every day. Without adequate funding, the daily operation and safety of these tracks could come into question.

Additionally, Amtrak employs over 20,000 people. It would have been shameful to allow these hardworking men and women to lose their jobs when \$2.3 billion was waiting for them just on the other side of the tracks, or just on the other side of the impasse over this legislation. These tracks will be crossed today, and Amtrak, its employees, and, most of all, the passengers will benefit from our action.

Mr. Speaker, this is good legislation for now. But I must say, I do not approve of the fundamental direction we are heading in, in which we say Amtrak must be self-supporting or else. I do believe that fundamental infrastructure such as passenger rail may need and should get government subsidy and government operating subsidies.

That is not being done now under this legislation, and it is not in the cards politically in the near future, but I do believe that eventually we will come back to it, because we must maintain a national rail network, a national passenger rail network, not simply on corridors which can be made profitable; we must preserve service and increase service all over the country.

For now, this is good legislation. I commend those who have participated in drafting it and on reaching agreement on it. I would urge all Members of this body to support this bill today.

Mr. OBERSTAR. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the kind words of the chairman of the Committee on Rules and thank him for his support in helping us move this legislation forward and in crafting rules that indeed were fair and moved the process along.

I would like to just add a footnote to the comment of my colleague, the gentleman from New York. While I respect his view, the objective of this legislation and what has moved us in this direction is a fervent hope that we will, through this legislation, move Amtrak to self-sufficiency, not dependence on public subsidy. That is, I think, an underlying element that has made possible these compromises.

Mr. Speaker, again, I want to thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. SHUSTER] for his perseverance, for the good fellowship and cooperation, and the frankness and fairness of our discussions, and for the result that we can all celebrate this afternoon.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I certainly want to congratulate and recognize my colleague, the gentleman from Minnesota [Mr. OBERSTAR], as well as the gentleman from West Virginia [Mr. WISE], and all the members of our committee who have worked so hard on this very complicated issue. The employees of Amtrak, the management of Amtrak, Secretary Slater, the administration, the other body, I think there is plenty of credit to go around for working our way through this very difficult issue.

I think we particularly should recognize the absolutely extraordinary job our staff has done, Glenn Scammel, Alice Tornquist, Jack Wells, Trinita Brown, Debby Hersman, really putting in unbelievable hours, as well as tremendous competence to make this all possible.

Mr. Speaker, today the House of Representatives and the Senate took a major step forward in ensuring that passenger rail service in this country has an opportunity to survive. By passing an amendment to S. 738, the "Amtrak Reform and Accountability Act of 1997" and forwarding it to the President, Congress is creating an atmosphere in which Amtrak, its employees and its passengers have an opportunity to make Amtrak succeed and work in a more businesslike manner.

Several questions have arisen in recent days over the impact that S. 738 would have on the \$2.3 billion that was made available in the Taxpayer Relief Act of 1997 and over the effect of certain limitations that Act could have on non-Amtrak States.

My colleague on the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, Congressman JOHN THUNE of South Dakota, has been at the forefront on the issue of potential impacts of both the Amtrak reform bill and the Taxpayer Relief Act on non-Amtrak States. For example, he has previously pointed out that the Taxpayer Relief Act, while setting aside some funds for surface transportation improvements in non-Amtrak States, does so in a way that might not give those States the flexibility they need. Mr. THUNE and Ways and Means Committee Chairman ARCHER have stated their intent to work together to address Mr. THUNE's concerns as that committee considers appropriate tax legislation in 1998.

Another issue potentially affecting the non-Amtrak States arose in the context of House deliberation on the Senate-passed version of S. 738. Section 209 of that bill included language that was intended to assure that the \$2.3 billion would not be used for purposes not envisioned in the Taxpayer Relief Act. However, section 209 was inadvertently written a way that could have been interpreted as shutting off funds to non-Amtrak States. In the final stages of negotiating the House amendment to S. 738, and with the technical assistance of the Ways and Means Committee and the Senate Finance Committee, we were able to include an amendment to clarify that non-Amtrak States will indeed be able to use funds made available for them in the Taxpayer Relief Act. Once again, Congressman THUNE's effort in securing this clarification was instrumental in assuring that South Dakota and other non-Amtrak States will get their fair share of the Amtrak funds.

We have assured that the Amtrak reform bill will not jeopardize funding being made available to South Dakota and other non-Amtrak States. Furthermore, the groundwork has been laid for addressing use of the \$2.3 billion in subsequent legislation. I commend Congressman THUNE's dedication and leadership in both instances in addressing the transportation concerns of non-Amtrak States.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. Speaker, I would like just a few minutes to address concerns I have as the lone representative from the State of South Dakota. South Dakota is one of six States that do not have intercity rail passenger service. As a result, I drafted an amendment to H.R. 2247, the Amtrak Reform and Privatization Act of 1997. I worked closely with the Gentleman from Pennsylvania, Mr. SHUSTER, on the legislation that would have amended a provision contained in the Taxpayer Relief Act of 1997. I worked with my colleagues from other States not served by Amtrak, including Alaska, Hawaii, Maine, Oklahoma, and Wyoming.

The amendment, though very narrow in scope, ran into jurisdictional concerns. Although it deals directly with transportation needs, the amendment actually makes a correction to the Taxpayer Relief Act of 1997 relating to tax refunds for the National Railroad Passenger Corporation [Amtrak].

Put simply, the tax provision would provide Amtrak with access to \$2.3 billion, contingent upon passage of the bill before us today. In addition to money for Amtrak, the law also would set aside a portion of the fund for non-Amtrak States. Unfortunately, the law apparently allows such States to use the funds for very limited purposes, such as intercity passenger rail service and for intercity bus services.

My State, the State of South Dakota, presently does not have intercity passenger rail service and has not for some time. And while I am certain the State would find a way to put available funds to use for intercity bus service that is privately financed and privately operated, it may not make for the best use for those funds. That is why I presented an amendment to the Rules Committee on October 21, 1997, that would give non-Amtrak States more flexibility to use those funds.

The amendment specifically would provide flexibility to non-Amtrak States to use the funds for transportation priorities such as state-owned rail operations, rural transit and transit services for the elderly and disabled, and highway rail grade crossings projects.

While I appreciate the cooperation and work of the Chairman of the Committee on Ways and Means, the Gentleman from Texas, has concerns regarding authorizing jurisdiction of the amendment that could not be overcome. Those concerns and his willingness to work with me to address the non-Amtrak State issue in the context of a revenue measure were addressed in his letter to me dated October 21, 1997. I look forward to that opportunity.

For States that do not have rail passenger service, each of these transportation needs would be legitimate alternatives. The amendment represents sound, common sense policy that simply allows non-Amtrak States to make the best, most worthwhile use of the funds provided for transportation needs.

My colleagues in the House and the taxpayers of this Nation should have every assur-

ance that the funds provided to non-Amtrak States will address important transportation links in each state.

For instance, the State of South Dakota owns over 600 miles of rail lines. The State purchased these lines in the early 1980's in an effort to ensure our State would continue to have access to reliable freight rail services. It is absolutely vital to maintain the farm-to-market transportation system in my State and to other States.

Likewise, we have acute transit needs, particularly in the area of transit services for the disabled, and rural transit services. In South Dakota, the Section 5311 transit program, which helps fund rural transit services, connects our seniors, disabled individuals, and children, in 42 of the 66 counties from rural locations to nearby communities for day-to-day living needs. The 5310 program supplements these needs by targeting its assistance at seniors and disabled individuals.

The amendment finally addresses an important safety concern. As my colleagues know, constructing and maintaining rail grade crossings are an important but often expensive safety priority. At present, only 219 of 2025 crossings are signalized in the State of South Dakota. For the sake of the railroads and motorists alike, the State and those traveling through our State would benefit greatly from additional assistance to improve highway/rail grade safety crossing.

I should also mention that I explored aid to rural air facilities and service. Unfortunately, air service to South Dakota too often hangs precariously. There is little competition for commercial service but a significant demand. This situation unfortunately leads to high ticket prices and limited service. I hope to wrap aviation needs into the context of my amendment in the future. Doing so would be consistent with the spirit of the program, which is to give non-Amtrak States more options to address interstate transportation needs.

The amendment in sum helps non-Amtrak States maintain rail safety, transit for the elderly and disabled as well as the general public, and finally important freight rail needs. At the same time, it takes nothing from Amtrak, States served by Amtrak, or non-Amtrak States that would like to attract Amtrak service in the future.

Again, I thank the Chairman of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee and the Committee on Ways and Means for their assistance and I look forward to continuing to work with them on this matter.

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I urge the passage of this bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. Snowbarger). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. SHUSTER] that the House suspend the rules and pass the Senate bill, S. 738, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the Senate bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members

may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous matter on S. 739, the Senate bill just considered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Pennsylvania?

There was no objection.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12 of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 5:15 p.m.

Accordingly (at 4 o'clock and 51 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess until approximately 5:15 p.m.

□ 1725

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore [Mr. BLUNT] at 5 o'clock and 25 minutes p.m.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION WAIVING POINTS OF ORDER AGAINST CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 2267, DEPARTMENTS OF COMMERCE, JUSTICE, AND STATE, THE JUDICIARY, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 1998.

Mr. GOSS, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 105-406) on the resolution (H. Res. 330) waiving points of order against the conference report to accompany the bill (H.R. 2267) making appropriations for the Departments of Commerce, Justice, and State, the Judiciary, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1998, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

CALLING FOR RESIGNATION OR REMOVAL FROM OFFICE OF SARA LISTER, ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE ARMY

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 197) calling for the resignation or removal from office of Sara E. Lister, Assistant Secretary of the Army for Manpower and Reserve Affairs.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. CON. RES. 197

Whereas Sara E. Lister, Assistant Secretary of the Army for Manpower and Reserve Affairs, on October 26, 1997, at a public conference held in Baltimore, Maryland, stated that "The Marines are extremists.":

Whereas such a characterization denigrates 222 years of sacrifice and dedication to the Nation by the Marine Corps and dishonors the hundreds of thousands of Marines whose blood has been shed in the name of freedom;

Whereas citizens from all walks of life have donned the Marine Corps uniform and gone to war to defend the Nation, many never to return;