

“(i) NORTH-CENTRAL CENTER OF EXCELLENCE.—A north-central research center for the region composed of the States of Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Minnesota, Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, Wisconsin, and Wyoming.

“(ii) NORTHEASTERN CENTER OF EXCELLENCE.—A northeastern research center for the region composed of the States of Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, and West Virginia.

“(iii) SOUTH-CENTRAL CENTER OF EXCELLENCE.—A south-central research center for the region composed of the States of Arkansas, Colorado, Kansas, Louisiana, Missouri, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas.

“(iv) SOUTHEASTERN CENTER OF EXCELLENCE.—A southeastern research center for the region composed of the States of Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and the United States Virgin Islands.

“(v) WESTERN CENTER OF EXCELLENCE.—

“(I) IN GENERAL.—A western research center for the region composed of the States of Arizona, California, Idaho, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, Washington, and the States and insular areas covered by the subcenter described in subclause (II).

“(II) WESTERN INSULAR PACIFIC SUBCENTER.—Within the western research center established under subclause (I), a western insular Pacific research subcenter for the region of Alaska, Hawaii, Guam, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Republic of Palau.

“(C) CRITERIA.—The Secretary, in coordination with the Administrator of the Federal Highway Administration and the Administrator of the Federal Transit Administration, shall select each recipient of a grant under subsection (b) and this subsection through a competitive process based on the assessment of the Secretary of—

“(i) the demonstrated leadership within the field of biobased transportation fuel research;

“(ii) demonstrated experience in the conduct and management of research on biobased transportation fuel feedstocks; and

“(iii) demonstrated experience in working with multiple Federal agencies;

“(ii) demonstrated experience in awarding and managing not less than \$7,000,000 over a period of at least 5 years in competitive grant expenditures provided to land-grant colleges and universities, and institutions partnering with land-grant colleges and universities to conduct research and education programs in the area of biobased transportation fuels and biobased products that have the potential to reduce the cost of production of biobased fuel production through high-value coproducts;

“(iii) a demonstrated history of working with other land-grant colleges and universities within the applicable region in the conduct and implementation of field work on biobased transportation fuel feedstocks;

“(iv) a demonstrated history of collaborative efforts to collect and use natural resource and feedstock data for incorporation into geographic information systems and decisionmaking models;

“(v) a history of and working access to biobased feedstock production research stations in each State of the applicable region;

“(vi) the demonstrated ability of the recipient to disseminate results and promote the implementation of transportation research and education programs through na-

tional or regional education and outreach programs; and

“(vii) the demonstrated commitment of the recipient to the use of peer review principles and other research best practices in the selection, management, and dissemination of research projects.

“(3) SELECTION.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of the MAP-21, the Secretary, in conjunction with the Administrator of the Federal Highway Administration and the Federal Transit Administration, shall—

“(A) select nonprofit institutions of higher education to receive grants under subsection (b) and this section; and

“(B) make grant amounts available to the selected recipients.

“(d) USE OF GRANTS BY UNIVERSITY CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE AND SUBCENTER.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—A university center of excellence or subcenter established for a region under subsection (c) shall use 75 percent of the funds made to provide competitive grants to entities that are—

“(A) eligible to receive grants under subsection (b)(7) of the Competitive, Special, and Facilities Research Grant Act (7 U.S.C. 4501(b)(7)); and

“(B) located in the region.

“(2) ACTIVITIES.—Grants made under this subsection shall be used by the grant recipient to conduct, in a manner consistent with the purposes of this section, multiinstitutional and multistate research, extension, and education programs on technology development implementation.

“(3) ADMINISTRATION.—

“(A) PEER AND MERIT REVIEW.—In making grants under this subsection, a research center or subcenter shall—

“(i) seek and accept proposals for grants;

“(ii) determine the relevance and merit of proposals through a system of scientific peer review; and

“(iii) award grants on the basis of merit, quality, and relevance to advancing the purposes of this section.

“(B) TERM.—A grant awarded by a research center or subcenter shall have a term that does not exceed 5 years.

“(C) MATCHING FUNDS REQUIRED.—As a condition of receiving a grant under this subsection, the research center or subcenter shall require that not less than 20 percent of the cost of an activity described in paragraph (2) be matched with funds (including in-kind contributions) from a non-Federal source.

“(4) RESEARCH, EXTENSION AND EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES.—A university center of excellence or subcenter shall use the remainder of the grant funds, after application of paragraph (1), to conduct a regional research, extension, and educational program in a manner consistent with the purposes of this section.

“(5) PLANNING COORDINATION.—Grant funds made available under this subsection may be used to carry out planning coordination under this subsection.

“(6) MAXIMUM GRANT.—The amount of a grant made to a recipient for a fiscal year under this subsection shall not exceed \$6,000,000.

“(e) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated out of the Highway Trust Fund (other than the Mass Transit Account) to carry out this section \$30,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2012 and 2013.”

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The analysis for subchapter I of chapter 55 of title 49, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“Sec. 5507. University renewable transportation fuels program.”

SA 1708. Mr. WARNER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1813, to reauthorize Federal-aid highway and highway safety construction programs, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ . MOTORCOACH SAFETY STUDY.

(a) STUDY.—Not later than 3 months after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall award a competitive research grant to a qualified, independent research institution to conduct a comprehensive research study of the safe operation of motorcoaches that—

(1) uses naturalistic driving data equipment; and

(2) focuses on driver fatigue, driver distraction, hours of service, and other areas determined by the Secretary to be necessary.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 9 months after the date on which the research grant is awarded pursuant to subsection (a), the Secretary shall submit a report containing the results of the study conducted under subsection (a) to—

(1) the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate; and

(2) the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives.

NOTICE OF HEARING

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, I would like to announce for the information of the Senate and the public that a hearing has been scheduled before the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources. The hearing will be held on Tuesday, March 6, 2012, at 10 a.m., in room SD-366 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

The purpose of this hearing is to consider the President's Proposed Budget for fiscal year 2013 for the Forest Service.

Because of the limited time available for the hearing, witnesses may testify by invitation only. However, those wishing to submit written testimony for the hearing record should send it to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, United States Senate, room 304 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, Washington, DC 20510-6150, or by email to Jake_McCook@energy.senate.gov.

For further information, please contact please contact Scott Miller (202) 224-5488 or Jake McCook (202) 224-9313.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 16, 2012, at 9:30 a.m.

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

COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING, AND URBAN AFFAIRS

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 16, 2012, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing entitled "Examining the European Debt Crisis and Its Implications."

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

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 16, 2012, at 9:30 a.m., in room 366 of the Dirksen Senate Office building.

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

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 16, 2012, at 9:30 a.m.

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

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 16, 2012, at 11:30 a.m., to hold a briefing entitled, "Iran's Influence and Activity in Latin America."

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

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions be authorized to meet, during the session of the Senate, in order to conduct a hearing entitled "Addressing Workforce Needs at the Regional Level: Innovative Public and Private Partnerships" on February 16, 2012, at 10 a.m. in room 430 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

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

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 16, 2012, at 2:30 p.m. in order to conduct a hearing entitled "Securing America's Future: The Cybersecurity Act of 2012."

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

COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Indian Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Sen-

ate on February 16, 2012, at 2:15 p.m. in room 628 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

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

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate, on February 16, 2012, at 10 a.m., in SD-226 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct an executive business meeting.

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

SUBCOMMITTEE ON WESTERN HEMISPHERE, PEACE CORPS, AND GLOBAL NARCOTICS

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 16, 2012, at 10 a.m., to hold a Western Hemisphere, Peace Corps, and Global Narcotics Affairs subcommittee hearing entitled, "Iran's Influence and Activity in Latin America."

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

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Aoife Delargy, who is an intern in my office, be granted floor privileges during the pendency of S. 1813, the surface transportation bill.

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

MEASURE READ FOR THE FIRST TIME—S. 2118

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I understand there is a bill at the desk due for its first reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the bill by title for the first time.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2118) to remove unelected, unaccountable bureaucrats from seniors' personal health decisions by repealing the Independent Payment Advisory Board.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I now ask for a second reading and, in order to place the bill on the calendar, object to my own request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard. The bill will be read for the second time on the next legislative day.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I apologize to the staff and for everyone having to wait, but we have things we have been working on and we have made a lot of headway, a lot of progress. We are still not all the way there, but it appears to me that the House will probably vote on the conference report sometime tomorrow morning. That being the case, we will see what we can do to expedite things here.

I will have the authority now to have the vote on the judge and the cloture vote so we can do that at any time tomorrow. I will talk to the Republican leader to make sure it is a convenient time for everyone. We will come in at 10 tomorrow morning.

ORDERS FOR FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 2012

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate adjourn until 10 a.m. on Friday, February 17, 2012; that following the prayer and pledge, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the morning hour be deemed expired, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; that following any leader remarks, the Senate be in a period of morning business until 11 a.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each, with the time equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees, with the Republicans controlling the first half and the majority controlling the final half; that following morning business, the Senate resume consideration of S. 1813, the surface transportation bill; and finally, I ask that the second-degree amendment filing deadline be at 10:30 a.m.

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

PROGRAM

Mr. REID. Mr. President, there could be up to four votes. If things don't work out, we will have to have some of the votes later in the week, so we hope that can come to be. We will notify Senators the minute we have some way of moving forward with everything. The four votes would be, of course, the cloture vote on the highway bill, the Furman nomination, and we might have to do cloture on the conference report and final passage of that. So we will notify everyone what agreements we have been able to work on and get in touch with the Republican leader and hopefully move fairly quickly tomorrow morning.

Senators should expect a series of rollcall votes tomorrow on the motion to invoke cloture on the Reid amendment No. 1633 and on the Furman nomination. We also hope to consider the payroll conference report.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M. TOMORROW

Mr. REID. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask that it adjourn under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 7:57 p.m., adjourned until Friday, February 17, 2012, at 10 a.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate: