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Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

O God our Creator and Redeemer, we are accompanied by Your blessings. May these blessings motivate our Senators to rededicate themselves to Your service, striving to keep America strong. Make their hearts reservoirs of love, purity, and honesty. Lord, keep them calm in temper, clear in mind, and sound in heart, as You inspire them to do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with You. May the tyranny of partisanship and expediency never bend their conscience to low aims which betray high principles.

We pray in Your holy Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

TRANSPORTATION, HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2014—MOTION TO PROCEED

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I now move to proceed to Calendar No. 99, which is the Transportation appropriations bill.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 99, S. 1243, a bill making appropriations for the De-

partments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2014, and for other purposes.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, following my remarks and those of the Republican leader, the time until noon will be equally divided and controlled. At noon there will be a cloture vote on the motion to proceed to S. 1243. If cloture is invoked, all postcloture time will be yielded back and we will vote on adoption of the motion to proceed. I hope that will be a voice vote and we can begin consideration of the bill immediately following the vote at noon.

The Senate will recess from 12:30 until 2:15 p.m. today for our weekly caucus meetings.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

I ask unanimous consent that Senator CHIESA be recognized at 2:15 p.m. today for up to 15 minutes to deliver his maiden speech.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MARKEY). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REID. I am so happy to see the Presiding Officer. The Senator might have presided before but I haven't been able to witness that. So I am very happy to have the Senator here. We are so fortunate to have him here with his wide-ranging experience as a Member of Congress. My time in the House was some of the most pleasant times of my career. I so admire and respect the House of Representatives. And for the Presiding Officer to have spent almost four decades there indicates the people of Massachusetts will have someone here who will immediately hit the ground running, and we are very happy to have the Senator with us. We have the committee the Senator wanted, and with the wide experience he has had in the areas of his choice, he will be a great benefit to Massachusetts and our country.

Today the Senate will begin work on the Transportation, Housing and Urban

Development bill. It is a bipartisan measure that received six Republican votes coming out of the full committee. This legislation will strengthen our economy by investing in roadways, railways, airports, bridges, and more. I applaud the full committee chair BARBARA MIKULSKI for her good work and being so excited about bringing forth the appropriations bills, and long-time member of the Appropriations Committee chairwoman PATTY MURRAY. She is chair of the subcommittee that will be working on that for the next few days. I appreciate their diligence and their bipartisan work on this measure.

The Transportation, Housing appropriations bill has always been a bipartisan bill. As we speak, we have 70,000 bridges in this country in need of major repair. We have bridges in America today where schoolbuses unload their children before going over the bridge. We have bridges that are in need of extensive repair and some that need to be replaced completely. One of every five miles of American roads is not up to safety standards, so it is easy to see why this bipartisan effort to upgrade America's crumbling infrastructure is so important. Our deficient roads, bridges, railways, and runways are a drag on our economy.

But this crisis is also an opportunity—an opportunity—to create jobs by rebuilding America, which needs replenishing, restoring, and rebuilding. This bill will make traveling safer and more efficient for American families and businesses.

We get so upset when we are on roads and freeways that are jammed and we think how inconvenient it is for us. Think how inconvenient it is for one of those trucks that is carrying products to be delivered and sold, how much it is costing each of us in our individual vehicles, and how it is costing us more every minute that truck is stopped in a road because of heavy traffic. It is more expensive than virtually everything we do in America. We have to do

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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a better job on our crumbling infrastructure. This bill will make traveling safer, as I indicated, and more efficient.

The Senate bill also makes crucial investments in affordable housing programs that assist low-income families in need. This legislation is an important step toward eliminating homelessness, especially among America's veterans.

By contrast, the very partisan companion bill from the House that they passed puts affordable housing out of reach for most everyone. Many who are out of reach of getting help are the elderly or disabled.

The House bill also slashes investments on new roads and bridges, and makes deep cuts to the Federal aviation efforts to modernize our air traffic control system. The Senate bill is a bipartisan blueprint, investing in modern infrastructure and creating new jobs while maintaining a vital social safety net. House Republicans obviously have a totally different version. They are jamming things through there on a totally partisan basis.

On Sunday, JOHN BOEHNER, Speaker of the House, said Congress should not be judged by how many bills it passes but by how many laws it repeals. If that is true, House Republicans are failing even by their own measure. They have replaced virtually nothing. So by the Speaker's own admission they are not getting anything passed, and by his own analysis they are getting nothing repealed. So they are doing nothing. We have known that, but it is unusual for the Speaker to acknowledge that on the Sunday shows.

If my Republican colleagues are looking for a law to repeal, I would suggest they take a look at the short-sighted and mean-spirited sequester law. Democrats are happy to help them roll back these arbitrary cuts—these meat axe cuts—which threaten national security as well as the economy.

In the news today, there was a briefing by the Secretary of Defense talking about how senseless the cuts are to the Defense Department. They are done with a meat axe, as I said. So we need to roll back these arbitrary cuts—not only to the military but to all of government.

Unless Democrats and Republicans work out a bipartisan solution that replaces the sequester, crucial investments in everything from early childhood to medical research to military readiness will be in jeopardy. They are already in jeopardy.

It has been 122 days since the Senate passed its budget, but Senate Republicans still refuse to let Democrats, led by Budget Committee chair PATTY MURRAY, negotiate a budget compromise with our House Republican colleagues. Senator MURRAY and others have been to the floor numerous times. We have had Republicans come here to the floor and say how foolish it is not to be able to go to conference. We have not given up on reversing the sequester

and setting sound fiscal policy through regular order in the budget process. We know Democrats and Republicans will never find common ground if we never start negotiating. That is what Senator MURRAY has said many times.

Sequester will cost us investments in education which helps keep America competitive and will cost millions of seniors, children, and needy families the safety net that keeps them from descending into poverty. Because of drastic cuts to the National Institutes of Health, sequester could also cost the country in humankind, in a cure for AIDS, Parkinson's disease, or Alzheimer's.

Congress can stop these devastating cuts to crucial medical research and programs that protect low-income children. All they need to do is work with us. We can't do it alone. We need the Republicans' help. The cost of reducing the deficit with a meat axe today is missing out on the next polio vaccine tomorrow, and the price is simply way too high.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Republican leader is recognized.

WELCOMING SENATOR MARKEY

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I too want to welcome the new Senator from Massachusetts to the Senate. He will find presiding over the Senate an enlightening experience. And if tradition is followed, he will get to do it a lot.

THE PIVOT

There are many overused expressions here in Washington. Game changer comes to mind. But I think the worst may be the so-called pivot. I say this not just because it is used too much to mean anything, but also because it is a troubling frame of mind.

I mean, the idea that the White House can pivot to jobs for a day or two and then abandon it for a few weeks or months and then pivot back again for a couple of days epitomizes the attitude that turns people off from politics. It is the notion that job creation is somehow more about scoring points at convenient moments than doing what is necessary to get Americans back to work. This is the kind of thing that angers folks in Kentucky and across the country, but it seems to be the only thing this administration and its allies in Congress are ever interested in because here is the thing. Not only should we be focused on jobs day in and day out around here, as Senate Republicans have been all along, but it is also not as though we don't know what is needed to get our economy back on track. It is not as though we don't know how to get the private sector moving again and creating jobs.

We don't need to pivot. We need to do the things that have been staring us in the face for the past 4½ years. If Washington Democrats are serious about turning the economy around, they would be working collaboratively with Republicans to do that instead of sit-

ting on the sidelines and waiting to take cues from the endless political road shows the President puts up whenever he feels like changing a topic.

I mean, there are some pretty obvious things we should be spending our time on around here—things such as implementing a revenue-neutral reform of our Tax Code to make it fairer, flatter, and more conducive to the kind of economic growth that can generate the type of stable middle-class jobs we desperately need, things such as reimagining a regulatory state that was designed in the 20th century so that American companies and workers can remain competitive in the 21st. The regulatory state we have now is entirely geared toward the past, not the present and the future—things such as developing and refining more energy right here at home, instead of importing it from overseas.

But Washington Democrats haven't worked with us to do almost any of that. Instead, they have mostly given us higher taxes, an endless stream of regulations, and an unwillingness to pursue commonsense energy projects that could put more Americans to work right now.

They have given us a stimulus that ballooned the debt, maddeningly complex regulations that failed to solve too big to fail, and made bailouts the official law of the land. And they gave us a 2,700-page health care law that almost no one read, with a tower of at least 20,000 pages of accompanying regulations and redtape that almost no one can understand.

It is no wonder so many Americans remain out of work, with 54 months of unemployment at or above 7.5 percent. In Kentucky, the rate is, regrettably, even higher.

Meanwhile, Washington Democrats have been pivoting back and forth, back and forth. In fact, they pivot so much these days that they often don't seem to know what to do with themselves when there is an actual policy issue to be solved—an issue where you would assume many Republicans and Democrats would normally agree. Take the student loan issue. Right now the unemployment rate for 20- to 24-year-olds is about 13.5 percent.

For teens it is even worse—about 24 percent. The youth of our country are struggling. Yet, with that backdrop, Senate Democrats still continue to fight with each other over the student loan bill 23 days after the deadline they themselves warned us about.

Congressional Republicans and President Obama have actually been more or less on the same page on this issue from the very start. We have agreed on the need to pursue permanent reform for all students, not just a short-term political fix for some of them. Still, Senate Democrats persisted with show votes on a bill that always seemed more about politics than policy—wasting precious time. Then, with the July 1 deadline blowing past, they started bickering among themselves about the

way forward and continue to do so, apparently, even now. They need to stop. Democrats need to finally allow the bipartisan student loan reform proposal to come to a vote this week so we can pass it and ensure there is one less Washington-created problem for young people to worry about in this economy because it is tough enough out there for them already.

The Obama economy has not been kind to the youth of our Nation. I hope the White House and Senate Democrats will help us change that because this persistently high unemployment is simply not acceptable, and neither is pretending it can be changed by simply executing another pivot or delivering another campaign-style speech or just spending more taxpayer money because Washington Democrats have tried all that before, over and over, and, in fact, it is just not working.

I yield the floor.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

Under the previous order, the time until 12 noon will be equally divided between the two leaders or their designees, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I suggest the absence a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

STUDENT LOANS

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I rise this morning in strong opposition to the legislation which I assume is coming to the floor today which, if passed, would be a disaster for the young people of our country who are looking forward to going to college and for their parents who are helping them pay their bills. Our job is to improve the dismal situation in terms of college affordability and the indebtedness of young people in this country, to improve that situation, to make it better, not to make it worse, and that is exactly what this proposed legislation would do.

I ask for support from my colleagues for an amendment I have filed that would provide a 2-year sunset to this bill, an approach that would prevent student interest rates from soaring and allow us the time, through the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act, to deal with this problem through a constructive long-term solution. This issue is too important to be rushed through this body without hearings, without listening to the people who will be affected by this bill—the millions of young people who wish to go to college, who do not want to leave school in deep debt, and their parents as well. We should be listening to

them, not rushing this bill through today.

I thank Senators LEAHY, WHITEHOUSE, GILLIBRAND, and SCHATZ for their cosponsorship of this amendment. I look forward to widespread support from my colleagues.

Let's be honest about something we do not talk about enough; that is, in many ways our government is selling out the young people of our country. When we do that, when we ignore the needs of the young people of our country, in many ways we are selling out the future of the United States of America because the young people are the future.

If we do not turn this around, I fear very much that we will continue on the downward spiral we have seen for the last several decades, a spiral in which the rich get richer, Wall Street and the multinational corporations continue to enjoy recordbreaking profits, while the middle class continues to disappear and poverty remains catastrophically high. If we pass the legislation on the floor today without improving it, we will simply be taking one more step in the wrong direction.

Before I get into the gist of what this legislation is about and what my amendment will do, let me say a few words about where we are today with regard to the young people in our country.

At this moment the United States has, by far, the highest rate of childhood poverty of any major country on Earth—almost 22 percent. In many parts of this country we are seeing a lack of social mobility, where people who are poor, who grow up poor, stay poor. That is not what this country is supposed to be about.

At this moment the childcare situation in this country is beyond disgraceful. Millions of working families are unable to find affordable quality childcare, and many of our young people enter kindergarten and first grade years behind where they should be, both intellectually and emotionally.

At this moment the unemployment rate for high school graduates is close to 20 percent. That is the official rate. The real rate, including those who are working part time and those who have given up looking for work, is actually much higher. If you can believe this—and this is a statistic that should frighten us all; it should make us all ashamed—the official unemployment rate for Black youth age 16 to 19 is 43.6 percent.

I share the concerns many people have recently expressed about the tragic death in Florida of Trayvon Martin. But let's not forget that there are tens of thousands of other young African-American kids all over this country who are worried about where they are going to go with their lives. As the Bureau of Justice Statistics informs us, one out of three African-American men can expect to go to prison during his lifetime. What a horrible waste of human potential.

Our goal must be to see that these young people are ending up in college or in decent jobs—not in jail, not dying from drug overdoses, not involved in petty crime or self-destructive activities. This legislation will simply make it harder for those kids and for all kids to get the higher education they need in order to succeed in life.

Right now, today, hundreds of thousands of young people in this country who have the ability to go to college are looking at the cost of college, the indebtedness they will incur, and they are saying: No, I am not going to go to college.

What does that say about the future of this country?

This legislation, which over a period of years will drive interest rates even higher than they are today, will make it harder for the average kid, the working-class kid to get to college. All of us know we live in a very competitive global economy. If we are going to succeed as a nation in this competitive economy, we need the best educated workforce in the world. Unfortunately, compared to the rest of the world, we are doing virtually nothing to make that happen.

In June the OECD—the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development—released its annual snapshot on the state of education in developed nations. The report showed that the United States is losing ground to other countries that have made sustained commitments in funding higher education opportunities. We are losing ground, and the legislation on the floor today—again, over a period of years raising interest rates extremely high—will make that bad situation even worse.

The United States once led the world in college graduates. As a result, interestingly enough, older Americans—those between age 55 and 64—still lead their peers in other nations around the world in the percentage with college degrees, which is 41 percent. But, according to a very thoughtful report from CNN, this number over the years has flatlined. In 2008—and this is a very sad story indeed—the same percentage of Americans age 25 to 34 and age 55 to 64 were college graduates. In other words, in that 30-year period we made no progress at all. During that period, as we all know, with the explosion of technology, what we have said to our young people is, you desperately need a college education. Yet, in terms of percentage of our people with college degrees, we are exactly where we were 30 years ago. Meanwhile, other countries all over the world have significantly surpassed us in terms of the number of people in those countries who are college graduates. In fact, right now, where once we were first in the world in terms of the percentage of our people who are college graduates, today we are 15th in the world.

Many people do not understand that today the U.S. Government is making huge profits off of higher education and

the loans we are providing to our young people and to their parents. In fact, the estimate is that we will make about \$184 billion in profits over the next 10 years. To my mind, making huge profits off of young people and their families who want nothing more than to fulfill the American dream of being able to go to college or graduate school and get out and earn a decent wage and make it into the middle class is obscene. We should not be profiteering off working families who are trying to send their kids to college. Yet, with the current legislation that will be on the floor, over a 10-year period we will be making \$184 billion in profit.

Some people say: We have a deficit. We need to go forward with deficit reduction. This will help us to the tune of \$184 billion in a 10-year period.

I say: If you want to do deficit reduction, don't take it out on working families, low-income families who are struggling to send their kids to college when one out of four major corporations in this country—many of which make billions of dollars a year in profit—is paying zero in taxes. If you want to do deficit reduction, ask those multinational corporations to start paying their fair share of taxes, not working families who are struggling.

Let's be clear about what this legislation that I expect will be on the floor shortly will do. It provides a variable interest rate. Let's look at what the CBO is telling us about where we may be going with interest rates in the coming years. What the CBO tells us is that in 2013 a 10-year Treasury note, on which this formula is based, is 1.81 percent; in 2014 it will be 2.57 percent; 2015, 3.35 percent; 2016, 4.24 percent; 2017, 4.95 percent. Those are CBO projections.

Based on the formula in this bill, here is what Americans will be paying for student loans. The good news is that because interest rates are low now, in 2013 it will be 3.86 percent for subsidized Stafford undergraduate loans; in 2014, 4.62 percent; 2015, 5.40 percent; 2016, 6.29 percent; 2017, 7 percent, according to CBO.

Under the graduate Stafford Loan Program, we are going to go from 5.4 percent to 6.1 percent, to 6.9 percent. In 2016, we will be at 7.8 percent and in 2017 we will be at 8.55 percent. By the way, all of those figures are below the cap in the bill.

What about the parents who are helping their students through the PLUS Loan Program? In 2013 it starts at 6.3 percent; 2014, 7 percent; 2015, 7.8 percent; 2016, 8.7 percent; 2017, 9.4 percent. In other words, people will get up here and say that initially interest rates will be low—because interest rates are low—but they are not telling us that in years to come interest rates are going to go up to unsustainable levels.

My amendment says: OK. Interest rates are low today. Let's take advantage of that fact, and let's sunset this bill in 2 years, where we can then have interest rates that are reasonably

low—not as low as I would like them—and will not be prohibitive. Then, through the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act, we can sit down and deal with two issues: No. 1, how are we, on a long-term basis, going to provide affordable loans, scholarships, and grants to the people of this country who need to advance their education? No. 2, how are we going to deal with the entire issue of college affordability? College in the United States costs much more than it does in virtually every other country on Earth.

We have over \$1 trillion in debt in terms of college loans. College loans have tripled since 2004. Young people are graduating from college with \$27,000 in debt. That is average. Some students have more debt. I have talked to dentists who went to dental school and are now over \$200,000 in debt from their dental school bills.

We have a crisis right now, and it is a crisis which not only impacts the lives of millions of people and families in our country, it impacts our whole Nation economically in terms of whether we are going to have a well-educated workforce to compete in the global economy.

The legislation that is on the floor only makes a bad situation worse. The result of it will be more student debt than we currently have. The result of that legislation will be more young people who say: I don't want to get out of college and have a \$50,000 debt, so I am not going to go to college. I guess I will never make it to the middle class and never be able to contribute to the country I love in a way that I thought was possible. We have to do better than this legislation.

The last point I wish to make is a political point: elections matter. The Presiding Officer recently ran for office. I ran for office in November. President Obama ran for office. When we run for office, we tell the American people what we believe and what we are going to fight for. The end result of those elections is that Barack Obama won a decisive victory. He is the President of the United States. What he campaigned on is: I am going stand up for the middle-class. The other guys aren't going to do it, so I am going to do it. What I ran on—as well as many of my colleagues—was: We are going to stand up for the middle class.

The results came in, and you know what. Barack Obama won. We have a Democratic President. As of today, the Senate has 54 Democrats. My question is: Why, with a Democratic President and a strong Democratic majority in the Senate, are we looking at legislation which is virtually the same as the legislation passed by an extremely conservative Republican House of Representatives? How does that happen?

What are we telling our constituents who voted for us? We said we were going to stand for the middle class. If we are going to stand for the middle class, we are standing for the affordability of college. We need to stand up

for working-class kids so they can have the opportunity to be the first in their family—as I was in my family—to be able to go to college. We are talking to African-American kids and saying: You know what. There are alternatives to crime and jail. You too can go to college. Those are the people we are supposed to be talking to. I fear very much that the legislation that is coming to the floor will not do that. In fact, it will make people say: What is the difference? What is the difference between the House and the Senate?

I ask that my colleagues support my amendment. It will give us the time to come up with a long-term solution to a very serious problem.

I yield the floor and note the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. SANDERS. I ask unanimous consent that the time be equally divided.

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

Mr. SANDERS. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COONS). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I rise as the chair of the full Appropriations Committee in support of the fiscal year 2014 Transportation, Housing and Urban Development appropriations bill. At noon we will be voting on the motion to proceed. I am here in the strongest, most affirmative way to urge my colleagues to please vote yes so we can get on with this very important bill that was fashioned with bipartisan participation to literally get America moving again.

The Transportation-HUD appropriations bill for 2014, under the leadership of Senator MURRAY and the ranking member Senator COLLINS, is an outstanding effort. It shows what bipartisan consensus is and focuses on two things: America's infrastructure and transportation and meeting compelling human needs in housing and urban development, both of which contribute to creating jobs in the United States of America.

This is not a bill where jobs will be on a slow boat to China or a fast track to Mexico. It puts America on the right track to meet these needs in transportation.

There is a very good reason we need this bill. The American Society of Civil Engineers says the need for physical

infrastructure in our country is piling up. Steel rusts, asphalt wears out, and buildings need to be repaired, to be maintained.

It is not politics; it is physics. We have to make investments today so our Nation can grow. We still have an unemployment rate of over 7 percent.

So how do we get America moving? Public investment that creates private sector jobs.

That is what we like about transportation. This bill, under the leadership of Senators MURRAY and COLLINS, includes Federal aviation—that is a word for airports—the Federal Highway Administration, in which we need to build and repair, Amtrak, and also the National Transportation Safety Board. When there is an accident, they are on the job find out what the problems are.

This bill keeps America moving on land, sea, and in the air. But, most of all, it is about bread-and-butter issues. It meets real needs in real time in our communities, building roads and building community.

This is also why I am a strong supporter of the housing and urban development aspects in this bill. The Presiding Officer knows of my social work background; I know of his as a county executive—working hand in hand on the needs of the people in the Delmarva Peninsula. We know there is prosperity and pockets of poverty. This bill, through the community development block grants, helps meet these compelling needs—again, local needs decided by local leaders in real time. It also meets needs for the elderly and for the disabled.

The Senate bill provides an allocation, under my leadership, of \$54 billion in discretionary spending. This is in sharp contrast to the House bill, which provides \$10 billion less than the Senate. The House allocation fails to provide those resources in transportation. Senators MURRAY and COLLINS will go into that in more detail.

But what I want to be able to say is, under my leadership as the full committee chair, my subcommittees have marked up—with the budget bill passed under Senator MURRAY's leadership chairing the Budget Committee—a top line of \$1.058 trillion. Oh, my God, \$1 trillion. Well, remember, \$600 billion goes to defense, and \$400 billion comes to domestic needs. If ever there were domestic needs, it is in our physical infrastructure in meeting the tattered, worn aspects of our communities.

There is a much greater debate going on in our country now because of the Trayvon Martin-George Zimmerman situation. A debate has begun, really under our President's encouragement, on race, ethnicity, and other aspects.

Well, what we need to do is be able to take stock of ourselves—take stock of ourselves: how we treat one another, how we view one another. Do we view one another as enemies consistently, do we view them on street corners or in communities, or do we begin to look at how we build community in our neigh-

borhoods, starting with housing for the elderly, making sure the disabled are taken care of, having respect for one another, passing an education bill dealing with the student loans.

This bill will put Americans to work and also meet our compelling needs, and we can do it in a way that shows we can do smart spending to accomplish national goals.

I too want to reduce the public debt of the United States, but I am going to lower our unemployment rate. I am going to lower the rate of danger in our physical infrastructure. I also really want the motion to proceed to pass.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I thank the very able committee chairwoman of the Senate Appropriations Committee for her direction to our full committee to move forward on our appropriations bills. I am very proud that the transportation and housing bill will be the first of, hopefully, many bills to move through here, but I really thank her for her tremendous leadership, encouraging myself and my ranking member Senator COLLINS to move forward with our bill to the floor today. We will both be giving our opening statements. I know the ranking member on the full Appropriations Committee will be here as well.

The chairman of the Finance Committee has asked for some time to speak before Senator COLLINS and I move forward on our discussion of this bill today. So I will yield to him, and we will speak after he does.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Montana.

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, I thank the Senator very much. I also thank my friend from Maine for her indulgence. Believe me, I will be as short as I possibly can. I deeply appreciate their indulgence.

TAX CODE REFORM

I am here to basically say I believe we must very aggressively reform our Tax Code. It has not been updated since 1986. Since that date, it has built up barnacles, loopholes, deductions, credits. There have been 15,000 changes to the Tax Code since 1986, and there have been additions. There have not been subtractions.

Our code is out of date. Other countries have kept their tax codes up to date. They have ensured that their companies are more competitive with changes in their tax codes. We have not done so. Our American companies are losing out. They are losing out to other companies worldwide because our code has not kept up to date.

In fact, there is a recent survey by Harvard Business School. Harvard Business School surveyed over 10,000 of its graduates over a short period of time.

The conclusion of that survey, from those who responded, is America is starting to lose its competitiveness. We are losing out. Why? Many reasons. But

the one that bubbles up the most, the one that was most telling, is our Tax Code. Two reasons: One, they said, is the high rates. Our Tax Code's top rate, 35 percent for corporations, is much higher than is the rate for other countries worldwide. Other countries have lowered their top corporate rate. We have not lowered ours. As a consequence, when there is a merger, the consequence is that the headquarters ends up in another country, very simply because the tax rate in that country is lower than it is in the United States. The Anheuser InBev merger is one of many examples.

The second reason they give to the Code, why the U.S. Tax Code is causing the United States to be less competitive, is not only because our rates are higher but because our Code is so more complex. It is very difficult for people doing business in the United States or Americans doing business in the United States or people in other countries who work with the U.S. Tax Code to deal with our Tax Code because it is so complex.

In addition, our Code needs to be updated because it is so complex, not only from an international perspective but from a domestic perspective. Americans as individuals do not trust the Code. It is too complex. They cannot figure out their own returns. I might say, myself, it was not too many years ago I was sitting down at the kitchen table trying to figure out my own tax returns. I am not a wealthy man. Frankly, I had to give up. I could not figure it out. I felt un-American that I could not figure out my own taxes, especially as somebody who went to college, went to law school, is in the Senate. I still cannot do my own taxes. Something is not quite right there. Many Americans believe, as a consequence, that somebody else is getting some deductions and credits when they hire a fancy lawyer. They are getting credits and deductions that they are not getting.

Then small businesses. Small business has a devil of a time keeping up with rules and regulations, let alone tax provisions. They spend much more of their dollars on regulations, including tax returns, hiring CPAs to figure out the returns than big business does. It is usually the big business that can deal with the complexity of the Code. It is much more difficult for small businesses. The complexity of the Code is hurting our country because it is also hurting small business in America.

I might say too, as a couple of examples of the complexity, there are 42 definitions of a small business—42 different definitions in the Code of small business. There are either three or four definitions of a child. My Lord, you would think we all know what a child is. But there are three or four different definitions of what constitutes a child. There are many—I forgot the exact number—many different provisions in the Code with respect to the education deduction—education credit.

In my hand is a 90-page document explaining the education deductions alone—90-page document. You think the American family, American students have the patience to go through a 90-page document that explains which deductions are available and which are not? No way. That has got to be simplified. So we must simplify the Code, get rid of a lot of the junk, frankly.

I believe the approach we are taking in the Finance Committee is the correct approach. We have had over 50 hearings in the Finance Committee. We have had many sessions in the committee about what is next, as the occupant of the chair knows. The approach we are taking is very simple: We are starting with a clean slate. We are getting rid of all of the deductions, all of the credits. They total about \$1.2 trillion annually. We are getting rid of them all—\$12 trillion over 10 years. Get rid of them all, then start to build up which ones seem to make the most sense.

Senator HATCH and I are working together. This is a bipartisan bill. The ranking member of the Finance Committee and I are together in this approach. We have asked our colleagues on the committee, off the committee, all Senators both sides of the aisle: Give us your submissions. What do you want added back to the clean slate? Do you want anything added back? If you want something added back, how do you want to change it, how to tailor it? We are not going to stand here and mention lots of different ways it can be changed. Senators know what they are.

I think by working through Senators, it is more likely to be a better, a more solid, productive product. I urge all of my colleagues, send us your submissions. Send your submissions. There are a couple of Senators on the floor. I hope they have submitted their suggestions. They indicated they have. Good. I urge my colleagues to do so, because we are hearing directly from constituents.

We have a Web site. It is taxreform.org. There were 10,000 submissions from around the country of people telling us what they want. I submit, if our constituents are telling us how they want the Tax Code changed, at the very least we as Senators should also indicate how we would like to see the Tax Code changed and be in on the ground floor starting out, rather than having to come out on the floor and offer amendments, adding something back in that has to be paid for. If it is added back in, I do not think that is something Senators want to do.

We will mark up the tax bill this fall. There is going to be a markup. There is going to be a markup this fall. I am guessing—I do not like to predict dates because sometimes they change, but sometime this fall, September, October, November, in there, we are going to mark up a tax bill.

I urge Senators to be ready. This is bipartisan. I have worked overboard. I

have had meetings personally with every single Senator about the Tax Code. At lunch today, for example, Chairman CAMP and I—we meet weekly. At lunch today, we are meeting with 10 House Members, 10 Senators—a total of 10. We call it “burgers and beer” every 2 weeks over at the Irish Times. That is symbolic, because that is where the last Tax Code in 1986 was in many respects put together. The more we get to know each other, get to know House Members—I must confess there are a couple of House Members whom I did not know and they did not know who I was.

We talk about kids, we talk about tax reform. It is a bonding process to get to know each other better. DAVE CAMP and I are going around the country. We went to the Twin Cities a couple of weeks ago, met with 3M, with management, with their employees, and met with a small bakery. It is called Bald Eagle Bakery. We are going to Philadelphia a week from next Monday. I think we are going over to Delaware; I am not sure. We will be up in New Jersey. I apologize to the Presiding Officer. It is New Jersey. We are going to Philadelphia and New Jersey for another session. There will be others. We are traveling around the country. We want to talk to people to see what they have to say.

I think this is the way to crack some of this partisan gridlock around here, this partisan deadlock around here. How? We are working together, low key, building from the bottom to the top with these sessions, these meetings, discussions, keep talking. Because we all know the Tax Code needs to be reformed. It is way dated. It is out of date.

A small example is all of the exempt provisions, the 501(c)(4)s and (3)s, and so forth. This has not been addressed for over 50 years. All of the money since Citizens United is tax exempt, trying to find a safe home; that is, where there is no disclosure of either donors or amount. That has got to be maybe addressed as well. That is just one example.

My main point is to first indicate there is going to be a markup. It is an opportunity for Senators to send in their submissions. The deadline is the end of this week. I urge all of my colleagues to do so.

Finally, I am very grateful for my friends from Maine and Washington for allowing me to take time. I thank them very much.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. I ask unanimous consent to speak for 10 minutes.

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

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, we spend far too much time here in the Senate scrambling to address short-term crises and far too little time working to tackle the serious long-term challenges facing our Nation. That is why I am very pleased the Sen-

ate will soon be considering the fiscal year 2014 Transportation, Housing and Urban Development appropriations bill. This transportation and housing bill received strong bipartisan support as it moved through the Appropriations Committee. It was reported out of subcommittee unanimously.

On June 27, the members of the full committee voted 22 to 8 to report this bill here to the Senate. This bill received this strong bipartisan support because it helps families and communities, it gets workers back on the job, it is fiscally responsible, and it lays down a strong foundation for long-term and broad-based economic growth.

Our transportation and housing bill is very different from the one that is moving through the House of Representatives right now, which passed out of their committee on a strict party-line vote. The Senate bill funds the highly successful TIGER Program to ensure support for transportation projects of national or regional significance. The House bill zeros out that funding and even takes away TIGER funding provided for this current year.

The Senate bill provides \$500 million to make necessary repairs to our Nation's bridges, when one in four bridges today across the country is classified as deficient. The House bill does not provide that critical funding. Our bipartisan Senate bill fully funds the Essential Air Service Program. The House bill kicks communities out of the program and then shortchanges the program.

On this side, our bill protects investments in our aviation infrastructure, while the House bill cuts spending we need to maintain and modernize the air traffic system by more than \$½ billion, to the lowest level since fiscal year 2000, more than a decade ago now.

The Senate bill maintains funding for the CDBG and HOME Programs, while the House bill proposes to cut both to their lowest levels ever. It preserves the Federal commitment to the mostly elderly and disabled tenants of public housing and section 8 project-based housing, while the intentional short funding of both programs in the House bill would ultimately lead to their demise.

The House bill falls short in these and many other areas because its investment level is simply unsustainable. It is even lower than sequester levels. Without adequate resources to fund core and housing programs, it cuts deeply and broadly and very few programs escape the axe.

The approach taken by the House should concern all of us, because this is not about politics, it is about our country. Investing in our infrastructure is something that brings together the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, major labor groups such as the AFL-CIO, economists, and policy experts across the entire political spectrum because, as any business owner will tell you, no matter how challenging the current environment, you never want to cut the

investments that allow you to compete and prosper once that crisis ends.

There are plenty of independent assessments showing that right now as a country we are not investing enough in our aging infrastructure, and no one—no one—is suggesting we invest too much. The fact is, if we slash our investments in infrastructure, we are not saving any money at all; we are making things worse. We are weakening our basis for private investment and economic growth. We are putting public safety at risk. We are allowing congestion to continue taxing families with painfully long commutes, long waits at airports, and health-threatening pollution.

Roads are going to need to be fixed eventually. Bridges are going to need to be strengthened at some point before they collapse. The air traffic control system will have to be modernized before air travel becomes too unreliable. Waiting will only make the work more expensive when we eventually do it. It is shortsighted and does not make any sense. That is why the bipartisan Senate bill supports critical investments in our Nation's infrastructure that are necessary to support and grow our economy. The investments included in our bill make it possible for people to get to work and products to get to market. Because other countries are investing in their infrastructure as quickly as they can, investments here in America are a key factor in making sure our country can compete and win in the 21st century global economy.

Our bipartisan bill also supports our local communities' efforts to promote economic development, supports small businesses, and creates affordable housing. These investments help create jobs and are necessary to ensure our Nation's economic competitiveness into the future. Our bill funds a critical piece of the safety net, housing assistance and homeless shelters for millions of families who are one step from the street. It moves us closer to finally eliminating homelessness among our Nation's veterans.

The need for these investments far exceeds the resources in this bill. But here in the Senate we have been able to keep our commitment to our States and our communities and ensure the agencies in the bill can meet their statutory responsibility. The House bill's untenable investment level and commitment to sequestration makes those commitments impossible to keep.

The Senate bill also works to improve the programs funded, including reforms that address concerns Members raised the last time the transportation and housing bill came to the Senate floor. Our bipartisan bill includes important section 8 reforms to reduce costs and create efficiencies. It contains reforms to improve the oversight of public housing agencies and boards, ensures accountability for property owners who don't maintain the quality of their HUD-assisted housing, and increases accountability in the CDBG

Program. The House bill doesn't include any of those reforms. Our bill also continues to require oversight by the offices of the inspectors general and GAO and incorporates their findings into the bill's guidance to agencies.

In short, our bill is a good bill, and, along with Senator COLLINS, I encourage Members to bring their amendments to the floor and to work with us to make this bill even better. This bill has broad bipartisan support because it takes a practical approach to addressing the real needs we find in the transportation and housing sectors. The investments it makes would create jobs and help the middle class right now, it would help lay down a strong foundation for long-term and broad-based economic growth, and it helps position our country and our economy to compete and win in the 21st-century global economy.

The approach taken by our House colleagues on their transportation and housing bill would cut investments in a way that may make our short-term budget deficit look better on paper but that would hurt our families, cost us far more in the long run, and hollow out our long-term investments and potential for economic growth. So I urge all our colleagues to help support our bipartisan bill and move us rapidly to final passage.

Again, before I yield, I wish to thank Chairwoman MIKULSKI, who was here a few moments ago, for her tremendous support and leadership. She was, as she stated, the former chair of the VA HUD subcommittee, and she really appreciates the importance of the investments this bill makes.

This bill does include the priorities of Members on both sides of the aisle, reflecting the bipartisan tradition in the Appropriations Committee. So I especially thank my entire subcommittee for their work, and I would like to take a moment to especially express my appreciation and thanks to my ranking member Senator COLLINS for all her hard work and cooperation throughout this process. I am very proud that together we have written a bill that works for families and communities.

Investing in our families and communities and long-term economic growth shouldn't be a partisan issue, and I think the bipartisan work that went into this bill and the strong support it received in committee proves it doesn't have to be.

I look forward to moving to this vote at noon today to allow us to get on the bill, and I encourage all our Members to bring their amendments to us. My ranking member Senator COLLINS and I will work our way through those as efficiently as we can so we can bring this bill to a conclusion.

Again, I thank Senator COLLINS for her tremendous work and her in-depth understanding of the tremendous issues within this bill, I thank her for working with us, and I yield to her at this time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

Ms. COLLINS. Madam President, I am pleased to join Chairman MURRAY as we begin floor consideration of the fiscal year 2014 appropriations bill for the Department of Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies. This return to regular order in which appropriations bills are considered individually, with the opportunity for full debate and for Members to come to the floor and offer their amendments, is welcome indeed.

Like Senator MURRAY, I wish to commend the two leaders of our Appropriations Committee—Senator MIKULSKI, the chair, and Senator SHELBY, the ranking member—for their commitment to returning to regular order. We simply must stop the irresponsible practice of waiting until the eleventh hour and then producing a bundled bill totaling thousands of pages with little or no opportunity for truly careful deliberation and debate.

I wish to thank our subcommittee chairman for working very closely with me to craft this bipartisan bill. She has been a tremendous leader of our subcommittee and has operated in a way that has been completely bipartisan.

This bill makes responsible investments in transportation and economic development and includes input and priorities from Members from both sides of the aisle. We listened to the concerns of our Members, and the bill was approved by a bipartisan vote of 22 to 8 in committee.

The fact is that the transportation and housing appropriations bill has a long tradition of bipartisan support. Every Senator has unmet transportation and housing needs in his or her home State, from crumbling roads and bridges, to economic development needs, to a growing population of low-income families, elderly, and disabled individuals who need our help.

According to the American Society of Civil Engineers, the condition of our Nation's infrastructure remains poor. Our roads, airports, and transit systems received a grade of D, while our bridges, ports, and rail systems received only a C. In fact, in my State of Maine the roads and bridges are among the worst in the Nation's rural transportation network. This matters because we need efficient and safe transportation networks to move our people around the country and to move our products to market.

The bill before us does not begin to solve all of our Nation's transportation and housing woes. We simply do not have the money to do that. After all, we cannot ignore the size of our unsustainable \$17 trillion national debt. We also cannot ignore the need for investments that will help the private sector create jobs and allow our people and products to travel safely and efficiently and our most vulnerable citizens to receive decent housing.

I understand that some Members are very concerned about supporting any

funding bill that has an allocation that is higher than the House counterpart. I certainly agree it is important that we adhere to current law, which limits spending to \$967 billion. But it is our responsibility to consider the merits of each of the Senate funding bills and produce bills based on our best judgments. Then we negotiate with our House counterparts in conference. That is the way the process is supposed to work. That is how we produce compromises. That is how we produce appropriations bills. The Senate should not be a rubberstamp for the House, nor should the House be a rubberstamp for the Senate. Each body should come forth with its individual appropriations bills, and then we should meet in conference, negotiate, and produce bills that can have the support of both bodies.

The fact is that the fiscal year 2014 House transportation and HUD allocation of \$44.1 billion is, in my judgment, insufficient to meet the true needs of both transportation and housing. In fact, the House allocation was \$51.6 billion just last fiscal year, so this year's House allocation reflects a dramatic cut. Could there be further cuts in our bill? Absolutely. I am sure there will be some worthwhile amendments offered on the Senate floor, and, more importantly, I believe that when we negotiate with our House counterparts we will produce a bill that is most likely somewhere in between the two allocations.

Our bill is by no means a perfect bill, but the House bill includes policy choices I believe most Senators will find problematic if they take a close look at the House provisions. Let me cite one example.

Our bill provides nearly \$3.2 billion for the Community Development Block Grant Program. The CDBG Program supports economic development leading to job creation across the country. I want to point out that the President's budget cut that program. It proposed \$2.8 billion, which is the lowest funding level since 1976, when President Gerald Ford was in office. The CDBG Program is one of the most popular Federal programs because of the flexibility it gives communities and States to tailor their economic development projects. Yet the House bill would cut the program even beyond the President's budget by reducing this important program by more than \$1.1 billion below the 1976 levels. That is when the program was first created in a Republican administration that recognized that States and communities are best able to use the flexibility of the Community Development Block Grant Program to meet the needs of their citizens, to spur downtown development, to create incentives for businesses to locate, and to produce good jobs.

Our bill also continues funding for the TIGER grant program, which supports transportation infrastructure projects that have a significant impact on the Nation, a region or metropoli-

tan area. The House bill not only eliminates this program but also rescinds funding for the current fiscal year by 50 percent. That means a round of grants that are just about to be funded could not go through.

For aviation programs our bill provides sufficient funding to ensure that the NextGen modernization efforts will continue to improve the efficiency, safety, and capacity of our aviation system.

With the lower funding levels as proposed by the House, here is the irony: We would simply end up paying more in the long term than we would now by providing the funding when it is needed.

So this program isn't a matter of whether we need it; it is when are we going to fund it. Funding it now, as we have been doing year after year in an incremental way, allows the NextGen Program for aviation to stay on track, and it will end up costing less than if we cut the funding and stretch it out over many more years.

Our bill also includes \$1.4 billion for Amtrak while the House bill provides only \$950 million. But in no way is the Senate funding extravagant. In fact, it is nearly \$1.2 billion less than the administration's request for Amtrak, and it avoids gimmicks that the Obama administration used in this account.

While the needs for Amtrak infrastructure far exceed what we were able to provide, our bill is a step in the right direction. Under the House proposal, Amtrak would be forced to consider cutting service, which could affect millions of passengers, diverting them to our already congested highways and busy airports.

In reality, the overall resources provided in this bill are well below the level of investment that our Nation's infrastructure requires, as the subcommittee chairman so correctly pointed out. Nevertheless, it would spur creation by the private sector of good jobs now, when they are needed most, and it would establish the foundations for future economic growth.

Just as important to our economic future, however, is reining in Federal spending. Getting our national debt under control must be a priority governmentwide. In setting priorities for the coming year, this bill strikes the right balance between thoughtful investment and fiscal restraint.

I appreciate the opportunity to present this important bill to our Chamber, to our colleagues. As we debate this bill, I urge our colleagues to support the motion to proceed to the compromises our committee worked so hard to achieve and, most of all, to come forward with suggestions for improvements through amendments.

Let me end by emphasizing that point. I have the assurance of the subcommittee chairman that Republicans will be allowed to offer amendments. So I would say to my colleagues: Even if you don't like this bill, there is no reason to oppose the motion to proceed

on the bill. You will be given an opportunity to offer amendments, to change the numbers in this bill, to cut programs if you wish. But let's get on this bill so we can return to the normal process of full and fair debate on individual appropriations bills, rather than waiting to the eleventh hour, bundling them together with little review, with insufficient care, deliberation, and debate or relying on continuing resolutions, stop-gap measures, which wreak havoc on the ability of programs to be carried out in a cost-effective manner.

I see our ranking member of the full committee is on the floor and I yield to him.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HEINRICH). The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. SHELBY. Mr. President, I thank the chairwoman of the Appropriations Committee Senator MIKULSKI for moving ahead to complete action on this, the Transportation, Housing and Urban Development appropriations bill. This is the first bill reported by the Appropriations Committee to be considered by the Senate on the floor.

I believe it is important that Congress exercises constitutional authority over the funding of government. If we do not pass appropriations bills, the undesirable outcome is a government shutdown, which none of us wants. I believe, however, that the Senate is still on a precarious path.

The majority is pursuing a top-line discretionary spending level of \$1.058 trillion for the fiscal year 2014. This exceeds the Budget Control Act level by over \$90 billion. The Budget Control Act is the law that establishes and enforces, through sequestration, limits on discretionary spending.

In fiscal year 2013, most discretionary programs were forced to take arbitrary across-the-board cuts. We did not have to go in that direction for 2014. Over 1 month ago, all Republican members of the Appropriations Committee signed a letter to Chairwoman MIKULSKI calling for a top-line number of \$967 billion that complies with the law.

There could have been an alternative to sequestration. The Appropriations Committee could have written spending bills that adhered to the budget constraints of the law. This would have allowed Congress, not an indiscriminate formula, to make spending cuts of its choosing and to establish priorities, which we ultimately will have to do.

This level would have also given Senate and House appropriators a better chance to conference individual bills. Instead, several of the appropriations bills between the two Chambers are so far apart that aligning them would be difficult, if not impossible.

Regrettably, because of this disagreement, the endgame will probably be a continuing resolution. Every year that we have a continuing resolution or a series of them is another year that we drift further away from the regular order. In addition, even a continuing resolution for 2014 based on this year's

discretionary spending would require another sequester under the Budget Control Act.

Given the direction we are headed, I wish to vote against all appropriations bills that adhere to a total of \$1.058 trillion. It is not because the bills are entirely unworthy of support. That is not true. It is because they will ultimately lead us to a statutory dead end and erode the ability of Congress to control how the government is funded, as we have done before.

Therefore, I intend to oppose the motion to proceed, not because I don't think the bill has merit, as I said, but because in many ways it does. I will oppose the motion to proceed because it will inevitably lead us, once again, to an impasse that will result in further continuing resolutions and take us further away from any semblance of regular order.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. HEITKAMP). The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Madam President, shortly the Senate will move to a vote on the motion to proceed to the transportation-housing bill.

This is the first appropriations bill to come before the Senate. We have worked very hard, in a bipartisan way, to have a bill that invests in the projects that are important to this country, to move us forward, and help secure a strong future for this country. It is a bill that was tough to write. Our allocation is much lower than those of us who are working on these issues would like to see it, but we have tried to be pragmatic and practical and move forward.

I know there are those Members of the Senate who make the argument that our allocation is higher than the House and would vote against these bills. I would remind all of our colleagues, I have been out on this floor innumerable times urging our colleagues to let us go to conference on the budget so we can work out this disagreement and be able to have allocations be the same from the House and the Senate. But we have been unable to do that because a small group of Senators on the other side have objected to us going to that conference. So we are at the place now where we have to move these appropriations bills forward. It does mean eventually we will have to get to a conference and, as my ranking member pointed out, we will have to work out an agreement. But until we can go to conference and work out the overall number, we have to move forward on these bills; otherwise, we are going to face a crisis come the end of September in terms of funding our government and giving certainty to people across this country about whether we will be allocating funds for them to be able to move forward on their budgets at the local and State levels.

I urge our colleagues to vote yes, allow us to move to this bill. As my

ranking member has said, bring your amendments to the floor. If you have an objection to something in the bill or you want to change something or you want a discussion about something, we will be here, ready to take amendments, look at them, and have the will of the Senate move forward.

In a few short minutes, we will move to that vote and I urge our colleagues to vote yes.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mrs. MURRAY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

CLOTURE MOTION

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

The bill clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 99, S. 1243, a bill making appropriations for the Department of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2014, and for other purposes.

Mark Begich, Barbara A. Mikulski, Patty Murray, Mark R. Warner, Tom Udall, Martin Heinrich, Angus S. King, Jr., Sheldon Whitehouse, Elizabeth Warren, Dianne Feinstein, Patrick J. Leahy, Tom Harkin, Jack Reed, Richard J. Durbin, Richard Blumenthal, Mary L. Landrieu, Jeff Merkley, Harry Reid.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the motion to proceed to S. 1243, an original bill making appropriations for the Department of Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2014, and for other purposes, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN).

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 73, nays 26, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 181 Leg.]

YEAS—73

Baldwin	Blunt	Cardin
Baucus	Boozman	Carper
Begich	Boxer	Casey
Bennet	Brown	Chambliss
Blumenthal	Cantwell	Chiesa

Cochran	Kaine	Reed
Collins	King	Reid
Coons	Kirk	Rockefeller
Donnelly	Klobuchar	Sanders
Durbin	Landrieu	Schatz
Feinstein	Leahy	Schumer
Flake	Levin	Shaheen
Franken	Manchin	Stabenow
Gillibrand	Markey	Tester
Hagan	McCain	Thune
Harkin	McCaskill	Toomey
Hatch	Menendez	Udall (CO)
Heinrich	Merkley	Udall (NM)
Heitkamp	Mikulski	Warner
Heller	Murkowski	Warren
Hirono	Murphy	Whitehouse
Inhofe	Murray	Wicker
Isakson	Nelson	Wyden
Johnson (SD)	Portman	
Johnson (WI)	Pryor	

NAYS—26

Alexander	Cruz	Paul
Ayotte	Enzi	Risch
Barrasso	Fischer	Roberts
Burr	Graham	Rubio
Coats	Grassley	Scott
Coburn	Hoehn	Sessions
Corker	Johanns	Shelby
Cornyn	Lee	Vitter
Crapo	McConnell	

NOT VOTING—1

Moran

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 73 and the nays are 26. Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn having voted in the affirmative, the motion is agreed to.

Under the previous order, cloture having been invoked, all postcloture time is yielded back.

The question is on agreeing to the motion to proceed.

The motion was agreed to.

The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Madam President, the Senate has now agreed on a bipartisan basis to move forward on the transportation and housing bill. I wish to thank all of our colleagues.

As we move forward on this appropriations bill, we will be open for amendments. I know there are Members who have a number of issues they would like for us to consider. I urge them to bring their amendments to Senator COLLINS and me, the managers of this bill, as soon as possible so we can begin to work our way through them.

So as we go to recess for caucus lunches, I ask Members to please work with both of us so we can manage this bill in a responsible way and then move to final passage.

I appreciate all of the work of my ranking member Senator COLLINS as well as the members of the committee and all of the Senators who are working with us to move this bill forward.

Thank you, Madam President. I yield the floor.

TRANSPORTATION, HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2014

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1243) making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related