

Cornyn	Kaine	Roberts
Crapo	King	Rockefeller
Cruz	Kirk	Rubio
Donnelly	Klobuchar	Sanders
Durbin	Leahy	Schumer
Enzi	Lee	Scott
Fischer	Levin	Sessions
Franken	Manchin	Shaheen
Gillibrand	McCain	Shelby
Graham	McCaskill	Stabenow
Grassley	McConnell	Tester
Hagan	Merkley	Thune
Harkin	Mikulski	Toomey
Hatch	Moran	Udall (CO)
Heinrich	Murkowski	Udall (NM)
Heitkamp	Murray	Walsh
Heller	Nelson	Warner
Hoeven	Paul	Whitehouse
Inhofe	Portman	Wicker
Johanns	Pryor	Wyden
Johnson (SD)	Reid	
Johnson (WI)	Risch	

NAYS—12

Blumenthal	Coburn	Menendez
Booker	Feinstein	Murphy
Boxer	Hirono	Reed
Cardin	Markey	Warren

NOT VOTING—6

Begich	Isakson	Schatz
Flake	Landrieu	Vitter

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 82, the nays are 12. Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn having voted in the affirmative, the motion is agreed to.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I voted in support of cloture on the motion to proceed to the Bipartisan Sportsmen's Act of 2014. This is a procedural vote to begin debate on this bill, which has been introduced by Senator HAGAN of North Carolina and is cosponsored by 45 Senators, including 26 Republicans.

Senator HAGAN's bill seeks to enhance opportunities for outdoor recreation, including hunting, fishing, and recreational shooting. It also reauthorizes key conservation programs that support outdoor recreation. It is no secret that I strongly support efforts to combat violent gun crime and to reduce the high number of gun deaths and injuries that occur each year, but I recognize the distinction between legitimate hunting and target shooting activity, as opposed to irresponsible or criminal gun use. I believe there are ways to support the former without undermining efforts to reduce the latter.

If, during debate on this bill, Senators try to add provisions to weaken the laws on the books when it comes to keeping our citizens safe from gun violence, I will strongly oppose those provisions, but for purposes of today's procedural vote, I support moving forward on this bipartisan legislation.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as if in morning business.

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

HIGHWAY TRUST FUND

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I have a number of topics to go over, and I will do this as briefly as I can because I know colleagues want to put forward a unanimous consent request.

In our work every day something happens, and I feel compelled to talk about a few of these things. But before I begin my remarks, I wish to send a message of condolence to all those parents who have lost their children to violence in our country, in the Middle East, and all over the world. Children and all innocents must be protected in a truly civilized world. We need to work toward that day, we have to pray for that day, and it is going to take people who care in order to make that happen.

When somebody said you have to walk and chew gum at the same time when you are a Senator, they were more than right. There are so many issues coming at us, and I am going to speak about a few of them.

I will start off with the crisis we face in the highway trust fund. I wish to call attention to a transportation government shutdown which will happen in 25 days unless we save the highway trust fund. In August we have a slowdown in payments to the States, and it is very serious. Unless Congress takes action, billions of dollars in transportation funding to the States will be delayed or stopped.

I see Senator CORKER is here and I know he is here on another topic, but I thank him for his courage in working across the aisle and saying: We need to pay for our roads and our bridges.

I see Senator KLOBUCHAR is on the floor. She knows what it means when a bridge collapses, for goodness sake. You have to be able to pay for certain things in this country. We could argue about frills around the edges, but I don't think anyone would disagree with you if you went out on the street and asked whether the United States of America should have a grade A transportation system.

DOT, the Department of Transportation, sent out letters to all of our States warning that the fund is in a dire situation and we have to act. In 74 days the trust fund goes completely bankrupt if we don't come up with the additional revenue. Here is where we are. In 85 days, we actually have to reauthorize the whole program, and in 25 days, the payments slow down.

Why is this happening? It is because Federal gas tax receipts that are paid into the trust fund have not kept pace with inflation or the rising cost of building our bridges and highways. There are thousands of businesses and millions of jobs at risk if we do not act, and that is why we have so many people supporting the reauthorization of the trust fund and figuring out a way to pay for that.

We have the Chamber of Commerce, and they are aligned with the AFL-CIO. This is a rarity. Usually those groups are fighting each other, but we have unanimity here: The U.S. Chamber of Commerce, American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials, Associated General Contractors. As I said, the AFL-CIO. The Associated Equipment Distribu-

tors, the National Stone, Sand and Gravel Association, the National Ready Mixed Concrete Association, the American Society of Civil Engineers, the International Unions of Operating Engineers.

We have 70,000 bridges in disrepair, which are called structurally deficient. We have 50 percent of our highways which are not up to par. What are we doing? I can tell my colleagues what we are not doing. We are not doing our job.

Now, I can brag just for a minute. Senator VITTER and I were able to get a bill unanimously through the Environment and Public Works Committee—not one dissenting vote. I have to say to my colleagues who are listening, that committee is an object in the diversity we bring here. We have BERNIE SANDERS. We have JIM INHOFE. We have BARBARA BOXER. We have DAVID VITTER. We have JOHN BARRASSO. We have SHELDON WHITEHOUSE. We have BEN CARDIN and we have Senator FISCHER. So we have a broad diversity. I have to mention Senator SESSIONS and Senator GILLIBRAND and Senator BOOKER. This is a committee that represents the ideological spectrum of the Senate.

I will tell my colleagues we passed a bill out for 6 years. We know it has to be paid for, but I think we were very reasonable in what we said. We said, look, this isn't the time for a giant new increase. We kept it at current levels of spending, plus inflation. God bless Senator WYDEN and Senator HATCH. They are working on a plan to pay for this bill. We have colleagues, as I mentioned, including Senator MURPHY and Senator CORKER, who came together and said: Look, the Chamber of Commerce makes a good point. We haven't raised the gas tax in a very long time. If we do a few cents a year, we will be able to patch up this trust fund—and more than patch it up—get it going for 6 years.

Today, leading groups representing bipartisan State and local officials sent a letter urging Congressional leaders to find a fix for the Highway Trust Fund and to pass a long-term surface transportation bill. The organizations include the National Governors Association, the National Association of Counties, the National League of Cities, and the U.S. Conference of Mayors.

The Nation's surface transportation system is in a critical condition and significant funding is needed to simply maintain the current system. Nationwide there are 70,000 bridges that are structurally deficient, and 50 percent of our Nation's roads are in less than good condition.

Delaying a long-term bill just prolongs uncertainty. An extension into 2015 would create another crisis, just before the next construction season. To allow the Trust Fund to become insolvent would be unprecedented and further delay simply extends the uncertainty. We need a long-term bill no later than December and a short-term

patch for the Trust Fund now. Failure is not an option.

I will say this: The clock is ticking, however we look at it. One more time: The clock is ticking. There are 25 days until a slowdown of payments to the States. In 25 days our States are going to be howling because they won't be able to pay for work that has already been done. The way it works is they do the work and then we repay them for, in many cases, 75 percent of the work; in some cases, 50 percent of the work.

So I call on all of my colleagues: Let's set politics aside.

SUPREME COURT DECISION ON BIRTH CONTROL

I wish to speak briefly about two other issues. One of them has to do with the Supreme Court decision on birth control. I hope every woman in America is paying attention to what this Court did. Five men, all Republican appointees, basically said a corporation can put its religion above all of its employees. It is just astounding.

I voted for the Religious Freedom Restoration Act, and I know why I voted for it. It was a very important piece of legislation which said that individuals can't have their freedom of religion stepped upon. It didn't say corporations. So here we have a situation where one family doesn't believe in birth control, and now they are telling every woman who works there: Sorry, you are out of luck. It is really unbelievable. To me, the Court siding with the corporation over the thousands of people who work there is just shocking. What happened to individual freedom here?

We are going to try our best to fix it. Let's remember this: 99 percent of women have used birth control at some point in their lifetime. Let me say that again: 99 percent of women have used birth control at some point in their lifetime, and 1.5 million women take birth control solely for a painful condition. Sixty percent of the women on birth control take it in part for painful and difficult conditions.

So the Supreme Court, in an ideological, political decision, in my view, said to the women of America: Corporations are more important than you.

We are going to try to fix this. We are going to do everything we can. I hope we can reach across the aisle. I have hopes that we can, to fix this.

POLITICAL BLAME GAME

Now I will conclude my remarks on another topic. The week we were away I was working in the State. I went to some highway projects. I went to a national park. But all through the time I was working in the State, I was hearing a continuum of the blame game going toward our President.

Republicans blame President Obama for every single thing that happens. Not enough jobs? They blame the President, even though since his policies have been in place, we have had 52 straight months of job growth. Last month alone, 288,000 jobs were created. Remember, at the end of George Bush's

time in office, we were bleeding 700,000 jobs a month. The unemployment rate has dropped from 10 percent to 6.1 percent, and we could be doing even better if Republicans hadn't blocked the President's jobs bills.

The Obama recovery even includes a record-breaking stock market which helps everybody. Everybody has a 401(k), a retirement account. When the President took office, the Dow Jones average was under \$8,000. Now it has more than doubled, and the Dow hit 17,000 for the first time last week. Yet and still the President is to blame for not enough jobs.

Deficits. Republicans blame the President, even though since he took office, the deficit has been cut by more than half, and deficits would be lower still if our friends on the other side stopped fighting with us when we try to close tax loopholes such as ending the tax policy that rewards companies for shipping jobs overseas or passing more equitable income tax rules which would allow people such as Warren Buffett to pay the same effective tax rate as his secretary—not a bad idea—and would really help us. We would get rid of that deficit. Remember when Bill Clinton was President. We wound up not only not having a deficit, we had a surplus. When George Bush came in, he started a couple of wars, put them on the credit card; tax cuts to the rich, put that on the credit card, and we have been battling it ever since.

Now we have an influx of immigrants from Central America. Republicans blame the President, even though it is House Republicans who are blocking immigration reform the Senate already passed in a bipartisan way which will greatly enhance border protections, spends tens of billions of dollars on that, and sets out clear and fair rules for immigrants. And they blame President Obama even though the guidelines for how we treat unaccompanied immigrant children from countries such as Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador, those guidelines were sent to and signed by George W. Bush.

Then we have the civil war in Iraq. Republicans blame President Obama even though he opposed the disastrous Iraq war. I have to say that Senator PAUL is not in that category, and I appreciate that. For the most part, Republicans blame President Obama, even though he opposed the disastrous Iraq war which sowed the seeds for the sectarian warfare we are seeing today. How proud I was to vote with then Senator BIDEN, chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, and along with 74 of my colleagues, we voted to say there ought to be a federation in Iraq—semi-autonomous regions—the Kurds, the Shias, the Sunnis. Seventy-four of us voted for that, and the Bush administration laughed it off, including Condi Rice and Dick Cheney. We have them all on record. Now this thing happens and who gets the blame? The President gets the blame from the Republicans.

How about Benghazi. We have heard about Benghazi. Republicans blame the President and they continue to politicize this tragedy, even though under President Obama's leadership the United States has captured the suspected terrorist who is believed to be one of the masterminds behind the killing of these four extremely brave Americans. Benghazi is a tragedy. It is not about a scandal.

Now, how about the release of Sergeant Bergdahl. Republicans cried foul when the President got him released, even though many of them right in this Chamber—and they are on videotape—were calling for Sergeant Bergdahl's release. And they also have insisted that no soldier ever be left behind.

I have to say, it is just getting old. Republicans blame the President for everything, including issuing Executive orders. The Speaker of the House is suing the President for abusing his Executive power. President Obama has issued the fewest Executive orders per year of any President since Grover Cleveland. It is just getting to be too much.

I wouldn't be surprised if the Republicans blame President Obama for America's recent loss in the World Cup or even for their own six consecutive losses in the annual congressional baseball game.

Enough. We all need to work together. Stop the finger pointing. The people need us to work together, not to play the blame game. I am very hopeful that we will have a little introspection around here. It might be a little too much to ask for. But I think if we did it—there are so many good people here on both sides of the aisle, and if we just decided once and for all to put politics aside—the President won election twice. It wasn't even contested. So deal with it. Work with him.

I have served with five Presidents—a couple of Republicans, several. I battled with them, didn't agree with them. I remember Ronald Reagan, if we beat him in the conversation, would say, OK, let's move on. So, yes, sometimes Democrats win; sometimes Republicans win. We have to work together and move forward and solve the problems of this great Nation because the people expect it of us.

I thank my colleagues very much, and I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kentucky.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 2265

Mr. PAUL. Mr. President, I don't believe that foreign aid should go to countries that persecute Christians. I also don't believe that foreign aid should go to countries that host terrorists within their government. I have had this belief for some time, but I have met with a great deal of resistance in the Senate.

Last week, in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, I introduced an amendment which said that any country that persecutes Christians by law—Pakistan has a Christian woman

named Asia Bibi; she is on death row for the crime, some say, of blasphemy. Others say she never said a word. She is really on death row for being a Christian. She has been there for 5 years. I say Pakistan shouldn't get any American money and that no taxpayer money should go to countries that are persecuting Christians.

In the Sudan, another country that receives money from the American taxpayer, Meriam Ibrahim is on death row for the crime of changing religion. She married a man who is a Christian. She is now being detained. She tried to escape recently. She was redetained.

The only thing that is consistent about foreign aid is that it continues to flow, regardless of restriction, regardless of window dressing to say, Oh, if a country does this, we will take it back. It never happens. Our foreign aid, our hard-earned American tax dollars continue to flow to these countries, no matter what their behavior is.

So two weeks ago I came to the floor and I said, in Israel Hamas is now joining with the Palestinian Authority. Hamas is a terrorist group that does not recognize Israel and attacks Israel on a routine basis. Now that they will be part of a unity government, they will be receiving foreign aid from America. So I said, for goodness sakes, would we not want restrictions on this aid? Would we not want to say that our money shouldn't flow to Hamas?

They should have to recognize Israel's right to exist. They should have to renounce violence. On a daily basis they lob missiles from Gaza into Israel. Yet in the Foreign Relations Committee only one other Member had the guts to vote against this foreign aid, because foreign aid is so entrenched in our national psyche that it goes on regardless of the behavior.

Now, some will say: There are rules. If Hamas becomes a big part of this government, they won't get any money. Guess what. Hamas can read. They have read our legislation. They are purposely setting up their unity government to evade our restrictions.

There are already people who say the President has a waiver. So in my legislation, the Stand With Israel Act, we would get rid of the Presidential waiver and say that if Hamas joins a government with the Palestinian Authority, they should get no American taxpayer money. I said this two weeks ago. The Democrats said: No, President Obama doesn't want to give up the authority to continue sending money to these countries.

A week ago we had another disaster. In Israel three young teenagers were killed: Gilad Shaar, Eyal Yifrah, and Naftali Fraenkel, who was also an American citizen as well—killed in cold blood.

Do you know what the response of Hamas was? To stand up and cheer. In fact, I can give you the direct response of Hamas. Khaled Meshal, their political director, said: "Blessed be the hands that capture them." They stood

with glee and cheered when these three teenage boys were killed in cold blood. These were not soldiers, these were civilians.

The news reports are that Hamas has joined this unity government precisely because they are bankrupt. They want to get our money. That is why they are joining the unity government.

What is ours? Ours is the tepid "oh, please don't behave that way." But we have no teeth. The same thing has happened in Egypt, the same thing in Pakistan, country after country. The only consistent is the money never stops and the behavior never changes.

Some will argue that foreign aid is a way to project American power. Well, if it is, we ought to be projecting American values. We should project what America stands for. We should not be saying: Here is some money. Do with it what you will.

So this has real teeth. This act is called the Stand with Israel Act. It says: No money to terrorists, no money to Hamas unless they are willing to give up the war and begin to find peaceful means of coexisting.

So this evening I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be discharged from further consideration of S. 2265 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration. I further ask consent that the bill be read a third time and passed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, I want to say that I appreciate so much the point of view the Senator from Kentucky brings to the committee and his focus on foreign aid. No doubt there are issues relative to aid to many countries around the world that we need to be looking at. This is an issue, though, that I really believe the committee itself should deal with first.

While I appreciate his desire to deal with this and bring it directly to the floor, on behalf of myself and the chairman of the committee, I am going to object, but I am going to object because I really would like for this issue to be heard in an appropriate way—this issue and many others the great Senator has brought forth on the floor today.

I thank him for his concern. I thank him for the issues he has brought up. I hope the committee itself will deal with this important issue, as it should, through regular order. For that reason, I object to this particular unanimous consent request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, I was proud to be an original cosponsor for the reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act, VAWA, which protects American women against violence and human trafficking. I am especially proud of the tribal provisions we included in VAWA, which are critical because nearly 40 percent of American Indian women will endure domestic violence in their lifetime, compared to 24 percent in the general population. VAWA ensures that violence prevention programs receive strong Federal funding and gives law enforcement powerful tools to fight violence and trafficking.

Violence against women is not just a problem in the United States; it is a challenge around the world. That is why I am proud to be a cosponsor of the International Violence Against Women Act.

One key step to empowering women around the world is through access to education. Unfortunately, for many young women around the world today, educational opportunities are limited. According to the United Nations, only 35 percent of young women in Sub-Saharan Africa will receive a secondary education, let alone the college degree that opens up new opportunities for women in the workplace and in leadership positions around the world.

But even though gender disparities in education remain high, especially in the developing world, countries and nongovernmental organizations are stepping up to the plate to make a difference. Today, I want to share the story of an organization which empowers young women in Rwanda by helping them receive a strong secondary-school education.

Rwanda was devastated by the war and genocide in 1994, but against all odds Rwandans have managed to rebuild their country and become a model of low corruption, economic growth, and gender parity in government. The constitution mandates a minimum 30 percent representation for women in Parliament, and today, remarkably, it is 64 percent women. These women have been instrumental in the reconciliation and rebuilding of the country and continue to lead today. However, women are not represented at this level in all sectors, and in the rural areas many parents are skeptical of the value of educating their girls. As is typical in many developing countries, if parents have limited money to send their children to school, many will send only their boys and