

to modern family planning services every day. The outcry would be immediate, and it would be deafening.

I am confident that the Congress will reject this unwise and cruel proposal. It would be unconstitutional in this country, and it should not be imposed on millions of impoverished people in the developing countries who depend on our assistance.

I would note the importance of it. We had a man whom I admired greatly in this body, a Republican chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, Mark Hatfield. He was strongly anti-abortion but was an honest and good man who said that we had to have these family planning programs because without them, the number of abortions would skyrocket, that the number of deaths at birth would skyrocket, and that we would have higher birth rates, 95 percent of which would occur in the poorest countries that could not feed or provide jobs for their people.

Let's not do that again. Let's not make policy by sound bite. Let's make policy as to what is best for our country and that best respects the values of America—values that we have tried to demonstrate throughout the world. We also try to demonstrate that to our own country no matter where you are, whether you are Republican or Democrat or Independent, whether you are poor or rich, rural or urban. Let's work on what is the best for America, not on a budget that tries to polarize America and pits one group against another.

Mr. President, on this table I have on the floor, I note that it shows how we, at the Pentagon, have money to put into a border wall at the cost of the Department of Agriculture, clean energy, climate change, the environment, education, foreign aid, infrastructure, healthcare, the middle class, civil rights, labor unions, nutrition programs, child nutrition, and community investments. If we want to spend \$40 billion on a wall that will make no sense and have the taxpayers pay for it—easy—let's vote it up or down. I do not think the American people want it. They would rather see that money be spent on programs that educate people, that create jobs, that improve science and find cures for cancer and others, not for a wall that we will pay for and that nobody else will pay for.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that all postclosure time on the Sullivan nomination expire at 3 p.m. today and that, if confirmed, the motion to reconsider

be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

AMERICA'S SURFACE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

Mrs. FISCHER. Mr. President, I rise to discuss problems that affect almost every aspect of our everyday life no matter who we are, where we live, our level of income, or any other distinction that might be possible to make. These problems have to do with America's surface transportation system.

Like most Nebraskans, I believe infrastructure is a core duty of the Federal Government. It represents investment in our economy, public safety, and national security. In the Senate, much of my work has been focused on removing unnecessary obstacles to the flow of goods, materials, and, most importantly, people along our Nation's surface transportation networks. Through legislation and with Executive orders, we did lower the coefficient of friction on these systems. We can lower that enough that people and products can get where they need to go quicker and at a lower cost. I have been proud to support several pieces of legislation to do just that.

In 2015, Congress passed the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act—the FAST Act. It was our first long-term highway bill in more than a decade. As chairman of the Surface Transportation Subcommittee in the Senate, I was glad to help steer it to final passage.

I am also proud to have authored a significant number of its provisions. For example, the bill includes a new national strategic freight program that provides every State with annual guaranteed funding. Because of the freight program, States will have greater flexibility to work with key stakeholders and local officials to develop strategic investments in transportation. The program funnels transportation funds to States and allows them to decide on their terms how to use it. By dedicating funding for rural and urban freight corridors, the program enhances the flow of commercial traffic, and it increases safety on our Nation's roads.

The true beauty of this program is that it offers States the opportunity to make critical investments to best meet their specific geographic and their specific infrastructure needs. Nebraska can elect to invest in a rail grade crossing or a truck parking lot along a rural

road. California could choose to invest in ondock rail projects at our Nation's largest port complex located just outside of Los Angeles. It works for all States without leaving any behind.

The FAST Act was an important first step, but there is more to be done. President Trump has spoken frequently about the need to invest in our transportation infrastructure. Just yesterday, the administration released a set of principles for reexamining how we do that. I am encouraged to see these proposals that will give States greater flexibility to develop our infrastructure as well as reduce unnecessary regulations that delay these very important projects.

The proposal also talks about providing long-term solutions, which is something I have long supported. This is critical for States to develop, construct, and maintain infrastructure. Last week, at a Senate Environment and Public Works Committee hearing, we heard an update from Transportation Secretary Elaine Chao. She committed to working closely with Congress as we continue to develop commonsense solutions for our infrastructure needs. She outlined some of the proposals the Department of Transportation is reviewing to include in this infrastructure package. During that hearing—the Presiding Officer was there as well—the Secretary told me she is committed to working closely with my colleagues and me to develop a national infrastructure policy.

I also brought up the issue of delays due to burdensome regulations like the National Environmental Policy Act permitting process that directly affects Nebraska projects. To address these delays, the Nebraska Unicameral unanimously passed legislation that would allow the Nebraska Department of Roads to assume the NEPA permitting process. NDOR has sent a letter to the Federal Highway Administration to begin the implementation of this program, and that could take up to 18 months to complete.

I asked the Secretary for an update on the progress of the application, and she assured me the Department is following it closely. She said: "We know the issue, we are tracking it, and we will continue to pay attention." Furthermore, Secretary Chao explained that the administration "will not specify any list of projects" in an infrastructure plan. States know their transportation needs best, not the Federal Government. The larger the role States have from start to finish in developing their own infrastructure, the more they can direct funding to the projects that directly affect their citizens.

For the benefit of families across America in both our urban and our rural areas, we need to look for out-of-the-box solutions to ensure that our infrastructure is up to date. That is why I have introduced the Build USA Infrastructure Act, which looks to solve two major challenges to our transportation

system. The first is the near-term solvency of the highway trust fund's expiration of the FAST Act in 2020. The second is a lack of flexibility for States in starting and finishing major transportation infrastructure projects.

According to the March 2016 Congressional Budget Office projections, by the year 2026, the highway trust fund will face a cumulative shortfall of approximately \$107 billion. Meanwhile, we see construction costs climbing. The rise in the use of electric and alternative-fuel vehicles is causing trust fund revenues to fall. Heavy Federal regulations continue to eat away at that purchasing power of the highway trust fund.

America needs a new plan to successfully meet the looming highway trust fund shortfall and to strengthen our transportation system. The Build USA Infrastructure Act gives us a plan.

For 5 years following the expiration of the FAST Act, this legislation would direct the U.S. Treasury to dedicate approximately \$21.4 billion in Customs and Border Patrol-collected fees and revenues to the highway trust fund. Now, CBP revenue collections on freight, cargo, and passengers include tariffs, duties, taxes, and user fees at U.S. land, water, and air ports of entry. CBP revenues from these sources amounted to nearly \$46 billion in fiscal year 2015. Because of their nature as charges on freight and travelers, Customs duties and fees closely abide by the "user pays" principle that we look at in transportation funding. According to CBP, the agency only utilizes \$2 billion of that revenue for its operations, so the diversion of revenue would not negatively impact CBP's operating budget. By using an existing revenue stream which has a transportation nexus, we provide stability to the highway trust fund without increasing fees or taxes, and that is sound policy.

The Build USA Infrastructure Act also offers greater flexibility to States so their limited highway dollars can go further for them. I served 8 years in the Nebraska Legislature. I know our States, counties, and cities face real challenges in starting and completing infrastructure projects because of excessive procedural costs, delays, and really an overall lack of transportation funding. According to the Congressional Research Service, major Federal highway projects can take as long as 14 years to complete from start to finish. It took less time to build the Panama Canal, and we did that more than a century ago.

Greater flexibility, improved collaboration, and more autonomy can help States begin and complete their vital infrastructure projects in less time, which means lower costs. The Build USA Infrastructure Act would let them do that through State remittance agreements. This legislation would offer States more flexibility and control of infrastructure funding by establishing a new partnership between

them and the U.S. Federal Highway Administration. Under this arrangement, States are permitted to enter into voluntary remittance agreements whereby they can remit 10 percent of their Federal aid highway dollars in exchange for State purview over design, permitting, and construction aspects of Federal aid highway projects. The State-remitted money to the Federal Highway Administration would be deposited into the highway trust fund to help further address its growing deficit. It would give States breathing room as they work to bring in projects on time and on budget.

I am so confident in this bill because I have seen these concepts work at the State level. As a State senator in the Nebraska Legislature, I introduced the Build Nebraska Act. It directed a quarter of each cent of sales tax revenue toward maintaining Nebraska's roads and bridges. Because of it, more than \$1 billion will be available to meet Nebraska's infrastructure needs over the next 17 years.

I also introduced legislation that tasked the Nebraska Department of Roads with developing the Federal Funds Purchase Program. In exchange for giving up a portion of Federal transportation dollars, Nebraska counties and their towns can now receive funds with more reasonable regulatory requirements. Because of this program, major Nebraska transportation projects, such as the longstanding bridge replacement in Buffalo County and a major arterial street in South Sioux City, are up and running.

Investing in infrastructure means so much more than just adding a few lines to a map. It means connecting our families and delivering goods and services. In Nebraska's case, it means feeding the world. With persistence and prudent planning, we can build for the future, we can give greater economic opportunity to rising generations, and we can connect communities—family to family, town to town, and coast to coast.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I am happy to announce that soon I will be introducing legislation that reauthorizes several critical provisions to help fight human trafficking and bring us one step closer to ridding our country of this heinous crime.

The Abolish Human Trafficking Act is chiefly a bill about getting human trafficking victims the help they need by focusing on ways to support them as they rebuild their lives. To me, one of the most shocking things about this

terrible crime that victims of human trafficking need most is a safe place to live because without that, they will not be able to escape the people who have enslaved them, nor will they be able to begin the steps of the long road to recovery.

This legislation reauthorizes the Justice Department's Domestic Trafficking Victims' Fund, which we established when we passed the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act, a bill I authored that was signed into law last Congress. This fund—like a crime victims compensation fund—provides critical resources to help victims get the services they need to recover.

Part of the fund is financed through fines collected on convicted traffickers. It is a clear way we can use these fines to do some good. Last year, the fund provided almost \$5 million in victims services. By reauthorizing it, it can continue to serve more victims.

The bill also empowers victims by permanently reauthorizing the Human Trafficking Advisory Council—a group of survivors who annually advise the government on ways to combat this crime and lend a hand.

This bill goes a long way to help victims who should be at the forefront of any of our conversations about human trafficking. There is also no question that our Nation's law enforcement officials need more support to track down the perpetrators of this crime and bring them to justice. Certainly, law enforcement needs more training to better equip them to serve victims too. This bill also does that.

It requires the Department of Homeland Security to implement screening protocols across law enforcement anti-trafficking task forces. One of the hardest things about human trafficking may be, in fact, being able to identify that it is occurring when it occurs right in front of your eyes.

This training will impact the work of law enforcement at the Federal, State, and local levels. That way, law enforcement at every level of government can learn how to better spot trafficking victims and will have the adequate training to connect victims to the services they need in order to recover.

The legislation will also direct the Department of Health and Human Services to continue a pilot program to train healthcare providers about human trafficking. Healthcare providers, after all, are likely to come in contact with human trafficking victims as well, and they need to know the telltale signs that will alert them so they can report this to the appropriate authorities.

I have noted before that so much of the battle is about educating professionals but not just professionals. I would say all of us as ordinary citizens need to be on the lookout for signs of human trafficking.

Sadly, I learned a few years ago, when the Super Bowl was held in Texas, that one of the premier trafficking events in the Nation each year