

from our colleagues. The reason the Community Development Block Grant Program is so popular is its flexibility. It can be tailored to meet local needs. We have also included \$1.4 billion for the HOME Program. These two programs support the development of affordable housing and other infrastructure projects and revitalize downtowns, which in turn promote economic development and lead to the creation of more jobs.

I appreciate the opportunity to present this important legislation to the Chamber as we begin debate on the Transportation-HUD funding bill. I urge my colleagues to support the investments in this bill that benefit our communities all across this Nation and the families, veterans, children, and our seniors who rely on these vital programs.

Let me end my remarks by again thanking my colleague, friend, and ranking member, Senator REED, for his close collaboration and hard work. I am very proud of the fact that once again this year we have produced a bipartisan bill that was unanimously approved by our committee.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CASSIDY). The Senator majority leader is recognized.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—H.R. 2740

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the cloture motion with respect to the motion to proceed to H.R. 2740 ripen at a time to be determined by the majority leader, in concurrence with the Democratic leader.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

VOTE ON MOTION TO PROCEED

Mr. McCONNELL. I know of no further debate on the motion to proceed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

COMMERCE, JUSTICE, SCIENCE, AGRICULTURE, RURAL DEVELOPMENT, FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION, INTERIOR, ENVIRONMENT, MILITARY CONSTRUCTION, VETERANS AFFAIRS, TRANSPORTATION, AND HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2020

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 3055) making appropriations for the Departments of Commerce and Justice, Science, and Related Agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2020, and for other purposes.

Thereupon, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

AMENDMENT NO. 948

(Purpose: In the nature of a substitute.)

Mr. SHELBY. Mr. President, I call up the substitute amendment No. 948.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Alabama [Mr. SHELBY] proposes an amendment numbered 948.

Mr. SHELBY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

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

(The amendment is printed in today's record under "Text of Amendments.")

AMENDMENT NO. 950 TO AMENDMENT NO. 948

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I call up amendment No. 950.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Kentucky [Mr. McCONNELL], for Mr. SHELBY, proposes an amendment numbered 950 to amendment No. 948.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

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

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To make a technical correction)

On page 321, line 14, strike "\$5,000,000" and insert "\$5,250,000".

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 457.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Justin Reed Walker, of Kentucky, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Kentucky.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

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

The senior assistant legislative 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, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Justin Reed Walker, of Kentucky, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Kentucky.

Mitch McConnell, Martha McSally, Rick Scott, John Thune, Lindsey Graham, Rand Paul, John Kennedy, John Cornyn, Kevin Cramer, Pat Roberts, Mike Rounds, Thom Tillis, Patrick J. Toomey, Roger F. Wicker, John Hoeven, John Boozman, Richard C. Shelby.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I understand we are waiting for another Senator, and when he arrives, of course, I will yield.

H.R. 3055

Mr. President, I was just talking with the distinguished senior Senator from Alabama a couple of minutes ago. I know he has spoken, and we have begun consideration of a bill containing the fiscal year 2020 Commerce, Justice, Science, Agriculture, Interior, Transportation, Housing and Urban Development.

I mention this because all four of these bills are the product of hard work and bipartisan cooperation by each of the subcommittees. They were reported from the Appropriations Committee unanimously. Every single Republican, every single Democrat voted for it. It makes critical investments in affordable housing and infrastructure, rural development, our farming communities, small businesses, science, and our environment. They are good bills, and I am glad to have them before the Senate.

I want to thank the chairs and ranking members of the subcommittees and their staff for the good work: Senators HOEVEN and MERKLEY, Senators MURKOWSKI and UDALL, Senators COLLINS and REED, and Senators MORAN and SHAHEEN. They all worked so closely together. They show, despite the difficult atmosphere we often operate in, the Appropriations Committee can still put partisan disputes aside and make strong investments in the priorities of our American people.

The Agriculture bill continues the significant progress made by this committee and in the 2018 farm bill to deliver real wins for farmers, families, and rural communities throughout Vermont and across the country. The bill rejects the disastrous cuts the Trump administration proposed for on-farm conservation, rural development, and rural energy programs and, instead, makes important investments in farming communities.

It is disappointing that this bill supports the administration's ill-advised relocation of USDA research agencies. I have spoken out about this relocation effort and remain concerned about the loss of expertise and focus such a move precipitates at USDA.

I am pleased this bill further invests in the viability of our cornerstone Vermont industries, including dairy, maple, and organics.

It significantly increases funding for innovation in the dairy sector, funding that will directly benefit dairy producers in Vermont and across the country as they meet the challenges of a changing marketplace. The bill also takes important steps to preserve the

integrity of the organic dairy market, increasing funding for key organic programs and directing USDA to finally implement rules that will level the playing field for small-scale producers.

The Agriculture bill also once again includes funding to support the farm to school program. This nationwide program has given children and schools across the country the tools to craft farm-fresh, healthy, and delicious meals that students enjoy, while teaching children about healthy eating habits.

The Interior bill makes significant necessary investments in clean water, clean air, stewardship of our public lands. I am particularly pleased it has critical funding through the Environmental Protection Agency that will support work on water quality, habitat and fishery restoration, and invasive species in Lake Champlain. The bill also increases funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund that will support efforts in Vermont and across the country.

For States like mine that have seen communities impacted by PFAS contamination, the bill includes additional funding for remediation.

The Transportation, Housing and Urban Development bill continues critical support for infrastructure programs like BUILD. Vermont and States across the country rely heavily on these Federal programs.

It also invests in our Nation's rail systems that I hope will help extend and maintain rail service within my State of Vermont.

I am also pleased that this bill continues support for a development partnership between the University of Vermont and the University of Mississippi to research unmanned aircraft systems. The bill also protects important investments in affordable housing and community development.

The bill again rejects the administration's request to eliminate programs that support our communities, including HOME, Community Development Block Grant Program, NeighborWorks, and the Rural Capacity Building Program.

The Commerce, Justice, Science bill makes critical investments in economic development programs. It also invests \$7.6 billion for the 2020 census, the results of which determine how we distribute \$900 billion in Federal spending every year. It also ensures appropriate representation in Congress. This once-a-decade investment is critical.

I am grateful that this bill has increased support for the lifesaving Bulletproof Vest Partnership Grant Program, which earlier this year was given a permanent authorization by a unanimous vote in the Senate. It also supports important programs to provide support to crime victims, help to exonerate the wrongfully convicted, and to reduce recidivism.

So there are four good, bipartisan measures. I urge all Senators to support it. We have only 4 short weeks be-

fore the continuing resolution we are operating under expires. We need to do our work, and we need to do it quickly, so we can enact all 12 appropriations bills into law. These four bills are a good start.

Mr. President, I see our distinguished leader, a man we always rely on, on the floor, so I yield to Senator DURBIN.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois.

PROVIDING FOR CONGRESSIONAL DISAPPROVAL UNDER CHAPTER 8 OF TITLE 5, UNITED STATES CODE, OF THE RULE SUBMITTED BY THE INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE, DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY, RELATING TO “CONTRIBUTIONS IN EXCHANGE FOR STATE OR LOCAL TAX CREDITS”

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I move to proceed to Calendar No. 258, S.J. Res. 50.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 258, S.J. Res. 50, providing for Congressional Disapproval Under Chapter 8 of Title 5, United States Code, of the Rule Submitted by the Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, Relating to “Contributions in Exchange for State Or Local Tax Credits”.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

Mr. DURBIN. Thank you, Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the joint resolution.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A joint resolution (S.J. Res. 50) providing for Congressional Disapproval Under Chapter 8 of Title 5, United States Code, of the Rule Submitted by the Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, Relating to “Contributions in Exchange for State Or Local Tax Credits”.

Thereupon, the Senate proceeded to consider the joint resolution.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to the provisions of the Congressional Review Act, 5 U.S.C. 802, there will now be up to 10 hours of debate, equally divided between those favoring and those opposing the joint resolution.

The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I rise today in support of H.R. 3055, which includes the fiscal year 2020 Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies, or the T-HUD, Appropriations bill. I have worked closely with Chairman COLLINS, and I want to salute her for her excellent work and her leadership. This is a bipartisan bill, which includes key investments in transportation and housing infrastructure.

It has not been an easy job, but Senator COLLINS' leadership and her thoughtful approach and our collaboration, I think, have helped us present a bill to the U.S. Senate which is more than worthy of support.

While the budget agreement provided a 4 percent increase to our allocation, we actually have \$1 billion less in spending power compared to 2019 due to declines in offsetting collections and increased costs for renewals in HUD's rental assistance program.

Working together and with the input of most Senators, we were able to put together a solid bill that earned unanimous support in the committee. While we were challenged in developing this bipartisan bill, other subcommittees have faced an impossible task as the majority caters to the President's demands for a border wall and places no guardrails to prevent the diversion of defense funds to pay for it.

This is the same issue that resulted in the President's 35-day shutdown of the Federal Government between December and January. I hope the President will heed the majority leader's axiom that “there is no education in the second kick of a mule” and avoid a rerun of this brinkmanship.

The minibus package before us is a good start to a process that will hopefully deliver final bills to the President's desk before Thanksgiving. The T-HUD bill included in this package provides critical funding to repair our bridges, roads, and transit systems in order to improve the safety, reliability, and efficiency of our transportation networks. These investments will support economic growth, create jobs, and help to address our deferred maintenance backlog across all transportation sectors.

It rejects the President's proposal to cut Amtrak funding in half and phase out long-distance passenger service. Instead, we provide \$2 billion for Amtrak, which will allow it to initiate the Northeast corridor fleet replacement, deploy additional safety technology, and invest in bridge and tunnel replacement projects.

The T-HUD bill also prioritizes funding for aviation safety in order to strengthen the safety inspector workforce and enable the Department of Transportation and the FAA to address identified weaknesses in aircraft certification process. Chairman COLLINS and I have consistently worked to support FAA's safety mission, often exceeding the budget request each year to accomplish that.

We have been disturbed by many of the official findings and unofficial reports concerning the 737 MAX certification and the culture at the FAA. As the FAA reassesses its aviation safety performance and priorities in response to the findings of the inspector general, the National Transportation Safety Board, and other inquiries, we will work to adjust funding to assist the agency in fully executing all official recommendations in a timely manner.

I cannot emphasize enough the importance of enacting a full-year T-HUD bill to help address the FAA's safety and operational demands. If we end up with a yearlong continuing resolution, we will have missed the opportunity to