

Peters	Schumer	Warner
Reed	Scott (SC)	Warnock
Romney	Shaheen	Warren
Rosen	Sinema	Whitehouse
Rounds	Smith	Wyden
Sanders	Tester	
Schatz	Van Hollen	

NAYS—38

Barrasso	Ernst	Murkowski
Blackburn	Fischer	Paul
Blunt	Grassley	Portman
Boozman	Hagerty	Risch
Braun	Hoeven	Sasse
Burr	Hyde-Smith	Scott (FL)
Capito	Johnson	Shelby
Cassidy	Kennedy	Thune
Cornyn	Lankford	Tillis
Cotton	Lee	Tuberville
Cramer	Lummis	Wicker
Cruz	Marshall	Young
Daines	McConnell	

NOT VOTING—7

Cantwell	Rubio	Toomey
Hawley	Stabenow	
Inhofe	Sullivan	

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HENRICH). On this vote, the yeas are 55, the nays are 38.

The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Cloture having been invoked, the Senate will resume executive session to consider the Steele nomination.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT AND JOBS ACT

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, for many years now, there is a joke that Presidents have what is called infrastructure week, where they talk about infrastructure and the need for us to move our country forward and fix our outdated system of roads and bridges, freight lines, our ports.

We are, as a country, behind others countries in terms of investing in infrastructure, yet infrastructure week comes and goes without any progress.

Well, today, we had a true infrastructure week because the President of the United States signed legislation that came out of this body—it was bipartisan—that helps to repair our infrastructure in ways that is historic in the sense that it is a broader infrastructure bill than we have passed around here in decades.

It is a big day for infrastructure and, therefore, a good day for my constituents in Ohio and people all around the country—people who are stuck in a traffic jam or maybe people who are worried about the bridge they are going over, whether it is safe or not, which is the case of a big bridge in my community; or whether it is people who don't have access to high-speed internet and, therefore, can't do their school work or can't start a business or be able to get their telehealth. If you are a veteran in Ohio and you want to access telehealth, it is tough to do it in about one-third of our State because you don't have high-speed internet.

So there are a lot of different things that are in this legislation that will

help the people who I represent. We have a lot of aging infrastructure in Ohio on the water side, so our water infrastructure includes a lot of lead pipes still, as an example, and, therefore, drinking water issues.

But we also have a lot of edicts that have come down from the Federal Government that say you have to stop the combined sewer overflow. Our municipalities can't pay for the changes. This will help them as well.

In Cleveland, OH, we have a two-decade-old—I think it is a 47-year-old transit system. The cars, frankly, are being taken off track because they have gotten to a point where they can't be used any more, and yet it is way too expensive. The funding for transit will be very helpful in Cleveland, OH.

In my own community, we have a bridge people have been talking about fixing for, literally, 25 years, because I have been involved in that discussion when I was in the House and now in the Senate. The problem is the bridge was constructed assuming a certain amount of traffic, and yet the amount of traffic has more than doubled. As a result, they have taken the shoulders off the bridge in order to create more room for another lane. As a result, when you have a flat tire or an accident, God forbid, on the bridge—which, unfortunately, happens too often—there is no place to go and, therefore, causes even more safety hazards. The bridge is a bottleneck every single day, not just in rush hour. I can go there in the afternoon—you know, 2, 3 in the afternoon and people are backed up on this bridge.

A lot of the people who are backed up, by the way, are people who are in business. Eighteen-wheelers are trying to get through because it is the confluence of I-71 and I-75, two major interstates. So it is a big economic issue with all that lost time in commuting every day across that bridge, and all the lost time in terms of the freight has a big economic impact—billions of dollars, they say. Three percent of America's commerce goes across that bridge every day, so it is a real problem.

We have never been able to figure out how to fix it because we can't accumulate enough money locally—the State, Federal—to be able to make the big change that has to occur, which is building another bridge, expanding and fixing up the current one. It has been frustrating.

This legislation signed today will finally provide the tools to do that. They have to apply like any other project around the country. It is a grant that is based on merit, but the grant is specifically focused on major bridges, like ours, where you have this economic impact that are so-called functionally obsolete, meaning they are carrying more traffic than they should be. Ours is carrying twice as much.

It should fit very well, but they are going to have to come up with a local match as well. I am confident that it

can be found—a local match, which is less than we did before when we had a tough time finding that local match and were not able to move forward.

People in my community, they are ready for this bridge to be fixed. I mean, the Brent Spence Bridge is something I have heard about, again, during my entire career.

I got a little bit of funding here and there to do the environmental impact statement or do the engineering, but to actually get in there and do it is going to be extremely expensive. You are not going to find 2, 3-plus billion dollars without this kind of a Federal commitment. That is in this legislation, as an example.

It is also helpful that this legislation deals with our ports because one of the issues right now we have with the supply chain crisis is things are just not moving through our ports as quickly as they should, in part because our ports have fallen behind.

I mentioned other countries who spend more infrastructure. Countries like China spend a lot on their ports. China spends more than we do, as do other countries, because they know if you spend money on infrastructure, you get a more efficient economy that leads to higher productivity, and that, in turn, leads to economic growth and more tax revenue coming in, frankly. These are all factors that should be considered in looking at an infrastructure bill.

It is not like normal spending that might be stimulative spending that goes out the door right away. This spending will happen over 2, 3, 5, 10, even 15 years for these major projects. And then these assets that you are investing in—let's say it is a port, let's say it is freight rail, or let's say it is the bridge in Cincinnati or the infrastructure that is a water infrastructure issue in northeast Ohio because of lead pipes—what is fixed will last for a long time, so it is an investment in a long-term asset.

Right now, our country is facing historically high levels of inflation—the highest inflation we have had in more than 30 years. It is a big problem. Everything has gone up.

Gas—I heard yesterday now gas has gone up 50 percent this year. Two weeks ago, it was 42 percent. But all I know is it has gone up about a buck a gallon. When I fill up my pickup truck, I am spending \$100 now. That is tough for people, particularly people who have to commute for their work.

For lower middle-income families in Ohio, this inflation is really devastating. You go to the grocery—I just had somebody show me a photograph recently that someone took with an iPhone of three rib eye steaks for \$100 at Costco. Everything is going up, and that is really devastating.

You wouldn't want this infrastructure bill to add to that inflationary pressure. The good news is, as economists look at this, they say that it goes into the economy in ways that

should actually be counterinflationary over time.

What does that mean?

Well, inflation is where you have too much demand and not enough supply, right?

You have, coming off the pandemic, more people getting out and buying stuff, yet the supply wasn't there. That causes inflation.

Here in the Congress, we passed legislation that aggravated that—made it worse—because we passed \$1.9 trillion spending in March, much of which went into people's pockets. Think of the stimulus checks, \$600 more on unemployment insurance, and some of the tax provisions. And, in effect, it created more demand out there and the supply wasn't there, which raises inflation.

This spending is different. Again, this is not stimulus spending. This is long-term spending for capital assets.

What these economists say, including some conservatives, like Michael Strain at AEI and Doug Holtz-Eakin at American Action Forum, they say this is actually going to lead to less inflation because you are adding to the supply side.

So by building that bridge, that is part of the supply side of the economy rather than the demand side of the economy. I am pleased with that too. What we want right now is to push back against this inflation, not do something that creates more demand and more inflation.

One of my concerns about the other legislation that is being talked about is not the infrastructure bill, but it is called the reconciliation bill. The Democrats, I heard today, are calling it Build Back Better more often, but others call it the tax-and-spend bill. That is about more stimulative spending.

I have very serious concerns about that adding to the inflationary pressures we already have, which are so serious. And unlike what the administration said previously, it is not transitory. It is going to be around for a while. Every economist I talk to says expect it to be around for a year or two, best-case scenario.

Again, what we signed today, the infrastructure bill, should, over time, actually have a counterinflationary effect. Most of the money, again, is not going to be spent in the near term. Most will be spent over time. But when it is spent, it is spent on the supply side of the economy rather than the demand side of the economy.

I am really pleased that we were able to pass this legislation. I hope that it is not just going to provide a model for what we ought to do in terms of substance—you know, helping make our economy more efficient, more productive; doing things that make sense for the people we represent in terms of reducing their commute or making their bridges safer, as I said; or dealing with the online issue—not having access to high-speed internet; being sure that people will have safe drinking water.

But, also, it is important, I think, that this bill be looked at as a model of bipartisanship.

What do I mean by that?

Well, typically, around here, you kind of have a Republican or Democratic approach to something, and we kind of fight over it and there is not much space in the middle. The reconciliation bill that is being talked about right now, as an example, is all Democrats. There are no Republicans supporting it.

The question is, how do you tough it out through the process?

And because reconciliation can be done with just 50 votes, not 60 votes, the notion is you get every Democrat, and the Vice President will break the tie.

It is much better, I think, if you do something on a bipartisan basis because you get more buy-in from the country. You pass better legislation. It makes more sense for our country, like this infrastructure bill.

And the model that was used here was that some Republicans and some Democrats got together and said: Let's come up with a bipartisan approach to infrastructure, working from the middle out, not taking our directions from leadership on the right or on the left—Democrat, Republican or the White House. Let's come up with something ourselves that makes sense.

This was in the context of an early Biden administration proposal on infrastructure. Again, it is confusing because there are so many different bills out there, but this one sort of combined the infrastructure bill that was passed today and the so-called Build Back Better legislation they are now trying to pass. It had high tax increases—significant tax increases, mostly on the corporate side, but would affect working families. In my view and a lot of people's views on my side of the aisle, everybody was against the tax increases.

Plus it had a lot of what the Biden administration called human infrastructure. It wasn't just talking about core infrastructure, as we talked about today, the roads and the bridges and the rail and the waterways and other things that you would normally think of when you think of infrastructure: transportation infrastructure, airports, the ports.

Instead it also included a lot of support for soft infrastructure, as they called it, or human infrastructure, which in that case was healthcare, taking care of Medicare changes; some changes, I believe, in terms of childcare in the current Build Back Better.

What we said as a group—five Democrats, five Republicans—was we want to do infrastructure. This is something that has been talked about, again, forever. Every President in modern times, every Congress in modern times, has promoted the idea of a significant investment in infrastructure because America is falling behind.

What we said is: Let's make that promise we have given to the American people, something that we can actually follow through on this time, by having a bipartisan bill that has the support of both sides.

So we basically took the bigger bill the Biden administration proposed, pulled out the taxes—so no tax hikes—but also pulled out the so-called human infrastructure or soft infrastructure and focused just on core infrastructure. That was the principle basis upon which we went forward.

The other thing that we decided was that not only are we going to keep taxes out and focus on core infrastructure, but we were going to make it truly bipartisan, meaning we are going to come up with a negotiated settlement and we are going to make concessions on both sides to find that common ground and get this thing done. We are going to do it.

Sure enough, we did it. It took us 4 or 5 months. We started 8 months ago and passed it here about 5 months ago, but we had setbacks because there were tough issues we had to grapple with: how much money to put into the way you expand broadband, as an example, and how should it be done through the States or through the Fed?

We came up with ways we thought made the most sense, but also could pass muster up here in terms of bipartisanship. In the end, as a rule—not in all cases, but it is a rule—if it has to be bipartisan, if you make that your commitment, you are going to get better legislation because you are listening to everybody, including to the Governors in the case of broadband, including to the companies that provide the broadband, but also including the families and the parents who are driving to the McDonald's to get internet access for their kid to be able to do her homework, and listening to the small business entrepreneurs who are saying, We need this level of high-speed internet to be able to start a successful company in a rural area—say my home State of Ohio—and also listening to those who are interested in having enough access to internet to be able to get their medicine online, basically, to telehealth—to do actual discussions with medical professionals online rather than having to drive to the hospital, say, from a rural area.

That was all part of what we intended to do, was to not just have a good bill substantively, but to show you can do this in a bipartisan way. That group of 10—5 Democrats and 5 Republicans—then became 11 Democrats and 11 Republicans. We kind of grew out from there. By the end of the process, we had Democrats and Republicans supporting the final product, including the majority leader CHUCK SCHUMER and the Republican leader MITCH MCCONNELL. They both supported it.

And Senator MCCONNELL, in particular, because I am on the Republican side, gave us the space to be able

to work this out. He didn't agree with everything that we were doing all the time. He let his views be known, of course, but he knew that, you know, we had in our intentions to come up with something that was truly bipartisan and good for the country and that infrastructure was an area where we typically had had bipartisan support, but we just couldn't get it over the line because of the partisan gridlock around here to do anything.

And in this case, he gave us that space. We came up with a good bill, and he supported it, and MITCH MCCONNELL's support was helpful. In the end, 19 Republicans supported the legislation in the House.

Unfortunately, it went over there a few months ago and sat and sat and sat, and that concerned some of us because we could just see it becoming more political, more partisan.

And we had a commitment from President Biden and a commitment among ourselves—not only no taxes, being sure that it focused on core infrastructure, but also that we would ensure that it was delinked from anything else, particularly the larger reconciliation bill that is now being discussed, the so-called Build Back Better bill, but this was separate. We wanted our bill to be addressed on its merits, which is what our constituents expect. The American people don't want us to do Christmas trees up here, where you are trading things off. They want to know that if you have a good bill, you should be able to get it to the floor and get it passed, which we did here in the Senate, and I appreciate that.

But in the House, it got all entangled with this legislation that was partisan that no Republican supported.

Again, this is the large taxes, large spending bill that is called Build Back Better, probably \$2 trillion of spending. I saw some analysis today that if you don't sunset all the spending provisions, it is more like \$4.7 trillion, and there is about \$1.8 trillion in tax increases to pay for that.

So we will see what happens. I think there is going to be a gap in their revenue and their spending based on the analysis I have seen, and I just think it is the wrong time in the economy, as I said earlier, to even think about this sort of thing. One, to raise taxes on the economy right now, that is, I think, exactly the wrong thing to do. We should be helping to encourage those businesses that are finally coming out of this pandemic and have been struggling, don't have enough workers, to be sure that they can get back on their feet, not taxing them, and same with families, same with the so-called—the passthrough companies, the smaller companies that would be hurt.

And then we have got to be sure that as we move forward, we are not increasing inflation again and not—this stimulus to spending that goes to the demand side that puts more money in people's pockets, it is part of the reason we have this high inflation.

So I really hope that that legislation, the Build Back Better legislation, does not move forward.

But my point is, the infrastructure bill needed to be dealt with on its own and it got tangled up with that and that is too bad. But at the end, there was a vote permitted finally in the House of Representatives. After several pledges to have votes that did not happen, finally, it was voted on about 10 days ago now. And when that vote occurred, there was enough bipartisan support—not as much as I would have liked to have seen on the Republican side, frankly, because I think it is a good bill that Republicans should support, but there was support on the Republican side and the Democratic side, and it was passed into law and sent to President Biden, and he signed it today. So that is the good news, that we were able to get this done, and I hope, again, provide, at least in terms of what we did here in the Senate, a model going forward of finding out where can you find consensus between Republicans and Democrats on big issues that the American people care about.

I mean, we have got plenty of them. I would put an issue like immigration, what is happening at the border; I would put an issue like what is going on with our financial situation, with this huge new debt we have and the deficit spending every year. But there are so many issues: healthcare issues, issues that have to do with, you know, how you deal not just with the immigration on the border but people who are here. Shouldn't we be able to find some bipartisan consensus on these things, and isn't that what the American people expect us to do, where you have got big challenges, whether they are domestic or international, shouldn't we figure out a way, even though we have differences of opinion, to find that common ground and to move forward rather than to be stuck in a partisan gridlock situation?

Today, at the signing ceremony, the President spoke a little about that and said that he supported bipartisan efforts to move the country forward.

But by the same token, he also was saying he supports this reconciliation process that is strictly partisan and would be jamming our Congress, again, without a single Republican supporting it and doing policy that we think is wrongheaded, given where we are with our economy, particularly with regard to inflation and the need to come out of this pandemic with a stronger economy, more people working, and concern that tax increases will make that difficult.

So, again, I would like to congratulate everyone who was involved in this infrastructure process. It was a big group up here in the Senate, but the group of five and five—the five Democrats and five Republicans—who kind of led the negotiation, included my colleague KYRSTEN SINEMA, who led the Democratic side. She did a terrific job.

She was very persistent. For those of you who know her and have watched her, that won't surprise you. But she ensured that we kept on track, and sometimes you get off track because we had a lot of different issues we had to deal with. And it took us, again, a few months to get there, but she was very helpful in terms of moving us forward and getting to a resolution.

Ultimately, all 10 Members agreed: We are going to resolve this thing. We are going to come to a solution, even if it means not getting everything we want. And nobody gets everything they want in life, right? In your family, in your business, and in Congress, it is pretty much the same thing, and it is pretty simple, which is you can't get everything you want, but you can get most of what you want, and in this case, you can do something great for the American people.

The other eight of those colleagues were SUSAN COLLINS, MITT ROMNEY, LISA MURKOWSKI, BILL CASSIDY, JOE MANCHIN, JEANNE SHAHEEN, MARK WARNER, JON TESTER, and so many others who were also involved and helpful. But those were some of the colleagues who were part of this G-10 process.

A couple Members that I would like to mention tonight and thank them are, again, Senator MCCONNELL for his help giving us the space to be able to work this out and then ultimately supporting it and lending his critical support to something that is good for the country, good for Kentucky.

Also, KEVIN CRAMER, on our side of the aisle, was very helpful to us in bringing together our group of 22 Republicans and Democrats and then SHELLEY MOORE CAPITO. SHELLEY MOORE CAPITO is the top Republican on the committee that deals with a lot of these issues, including the surface transportation legislation, and she was very helpful, along with the chair of that group, TOM CARPER, to get us where we are. They actually met with the White House, SHELLEY MOORE CAPITO and a group of her members, and that gave us a foundation for some of the ideas that we had but also the committee work we respected.

One of the things that I have seen time and time again in the last couple weeks is that it is a \$1.2 trillion bill on infrastructure. In a way, it is and in a way it isn't. So just to explain that, briefly, Congress, you know, every year has a process where we appropriate funding. We also every 5 years, typically, do a transportation bill, the Surface Transportation Act. That 1.2 includes that. So the amount on top of what Congress would have otherwise spent, based on what the committees had done on a bipartisan basis, is roughly \$542 billion. So it is really a \$542 billion bill of new spending, not 1.2 trillion.

That may make some of my Republican colleagues feel a little better about supporting it because they are concerned about our debt and deficit, as am I.

By the way, we came up with ways to pay for that, including actually repurposing some of the funding that had gone out to COVID that had not been used, but it is really more of a \$542 billion in new spending—still historic levels and, again, provides enough funding to do all the wonderful things I talked about in terms of making our infrastructure work better for all of us.

Second is, I have heard a lot over the last couple weeks particularly about President Biden's signing his bill, the Biden infrastructure bill. He negotiated with us, and I appreciate that. His legislation, as I said, was very different. It had the tax increases. It had spending on a lot of human infrastructure, and I appreciate that he was willing to say to the Democratic side of the aisle: OK. That is what I want, but I am willing to work with you guys on a bipartisan basis. So he did do that, but he also, again, gave us space to work that out here in the Senate between ourselves, and that is the reality.

And so when we came together with legislation, we were sitting down with his people, including a guy named Steve Ricchetti, his Deputy Chief of Staff, and the National Economic Council head, a guy named Brian Deese, and we negotiated with them on some of the issues.

But this really came out of, again, a true bipartisan process. It is not really anybody's bill. It is America's bill because representatives from every part of the country were involved, and those elected representatives made decisions that were in the interest of their constituents but also our entire country. That is why, in the end, I think this legislation represents not just a victory for the American people, which it does, but in a way, a victory for common sense and bipartisanship that this place badly needed.

I hope it is a template for things to come, and I hope that when someone goes out on a limb and says: I am going to support this legislation because it is in the interest of the American people, that that person is rewarded rather than attacked.

And in the House I have seen some of this with some of my Republican colleagues who supported it; that people are upset on a partisan basis because they think it somehow gives too much credit to Democrats if this were to pass.

I mean, I suppose if you took that attitude, nothing would pass because it is either a Democratic or Republican bill, and this other side would block it. We need to get into a different mindset, where we are thinking, "What is good for the country?"

And, interestingly, when you look at what the polling data is saying about this bill, it is very popular. Initially, the numbers were, you know, 87 percent approval rating, Republicans, Democrats, Independents, everyone. One I saw yesterday was 65 percent because it has gotten, again, some—it has

gotten into more of the partisan back-and-forth, with Republicans saying that somehow because President Biden is in the Presidency, and he was involved with this, it is his bill. It is not his bill. It is all of ours—the bill—but, still, 65 percent approval rating is pretty rare for any major piece of legislation.

And so the American people get it. They want us to move forward. There are partisans on both sides, of course, who would prefer only that it moves forward if it is their way; in other words, we should block everything. But the vast majority of the American people understand that we have got to move forward and ensuring that you have adequate infrastructure to compete with countries like China, infrastructure changes that will improve our economy's efficiency, therefore, our productivity; therefore, increased economic growth; therefore, bringing more revenue in. Who could be against that?

There are differences of opinion on how exactly you ought to spend the money. I get that, but I do think this is going to be over time—5 years, 10 years, 15 years from now—something people will look back and say: Aha. This project which could never have been done, now has been accomplished and makes my life easier, makes my community work better. That is what this bill is going to be about.

And my hope is that, again, it will be a template for other projects in the future, where we say: Let's figure out a way—despite our differences—to figure out some common ground and move forward on these challenges that our country faces and on issues that people really care about to be able to make their lives better. Ultimately, that should be our job.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to legislative session and be in 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.

TRIBUTE TO SHERIFF KEITH CAIN

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, few sheriffs have accomplished as much, served as long, or helped as many as Sheriff Keith Cain of Daviess County, KY. After 48 years with the Daviess County Sheriff's Department, and 22 years as sheriff, Keith is retiring this year, leaving behind a breathtaking legacy of public service. Today, I recognize Sheriff Cain as a Kentucky hero whose record of service stands as an example for us all.

Sheriff Cain loves Daviess County and has spent his entire life working to protect and defend his fellow Kentuckians. He started his career in the Marines during the Vietnam war, showcasing the selflessness and sense of duty that would define the rest of his life. Upon returning to Kentucky, he joined the Daviess County Sheriff's Department, finding a home among his community's top law enforcement officers.

Fast forward nearly half a century, and it is clear that Sheriff Cain's dedication to his neighbors has not waned a bit since he first started his career. By pioneering new tactics and techniques, he has revolutionized law enforcement practices in Daviess County. As a graduate of both the National Sheriff's Institute and the FBI National Academy, Keith brought the technical know-how needed to beat any challenge that threatened his home community.

When the addiction crisis started in earnest in Western Kentucky, Sheriff Cain spearheaded Daviess County's rollout of Operation United Front, a program that helped combat the spread of illicit substances. He currently serves as the chair of the Drug Enforcement Committee of the National Sheriff's Association, using his expertise to help communities across the Nation. Keith is also a leader in law enforcement training and instruction. He served as the chair of the Kentucky Law Enforcement Council—the body responsible for all police training in the Commonwealth—and currently works at a local community college as a certified law enforcement instructor.

With nearly five decades of phenomenal public service under his belt, it is no surprise that Sheriff Cain has received numerous awards from law enforcement organizations all across the country. There are too many to list, but highlights include the Governor's Award for Outstanding Contribution to Kentucky Law Enforcement, the Kentucky Sheriff Association's Sheriff of the Year Award, and the National Sheriff's Association Sheriff of the Year Award. Keith has been recognized by organizations like the NAACP, the U.S. Marine Corps Law Enforcement Foundation, and the VFW. Needless to say, Daviess County will miss him dearly when he is gone.

While Sheriff Cain is retiring, I am confident we are not marking the end of his lifelong commitment to service. As the past half century has shown, Keith dedicated his entire life and career to care for his neighbors and community. While he will now have more time to spend with his wife Charlotte, son Jason, and granddaughters, Alexis and Alyssa, I am sure he will also remain an ever-present helping hand for Daviess County residents. On behalf of the Senate, I thank Sheriff Cain for his service and congratulate him on his well-earned retirement.