

That can be done and taking care of the people who got left behind and got shortchanged. We identify it. The bottom line is, we have a fix for it. Let us fix it.

If you wanted to fix it and have a good bill, you should have put it in committee. If it is not, it is going to be done next year with a commitment from the majority party. Let it be fixed, but don't throw another \$180 billion on top of it as debt—it is just irresponsible—and then tell your grandparents or your aunts and uncles who are depending on that Social Security check, like almost 500,000 West Virginians, that, you know, sorry, in 2032 now—maybe almost 6 months to a year earlier—you are going to have a 20-percent cut in your Social Security payment.

So if they are getting a thousand dollars a month, they are going to get \$800 in the next check. Why did it happen? How come? How can you let this happen?

We can fix that. We really can. All we are asking for is a consideration of this body to fix it and fix it right, take care of the inequities, take care of the people who have been shortchanged, but also take care of the people who are depending on this Social Security to be solvent.

Mr. CRUZ. I thank my friend from West Virginia, and I urge the body to listen to the very reasonable words from the Senator from West Virginia.

I will say, the Senator from West Virginia is retiring in just a few days. We are going to miss JOE MANCHIN in this body. We are going to miss a voice of reason on both sides of the aisle.

We have in front of this body a bipartisan amendment that fixes the WEP problem, that treats retired cops and firefighters and teachers fairly, but it does so while being responsible and not blowing a hole in the Social Security trust fund.

You know, my dad is 85 years old. My mom is 90 years old. Both of them rely on Social Security.

We have a solemn obligation to honor the promises we made to seniors. There is not a Senator in this body who hasn't promised seniors: I am going to protect Social Security.

Well, if the Senate goes forward and passes this bill, 73 Senators will be breaking their word. I ask my colleagues on both sides of the aisle: Do the right thing. Do the responsible thing. Keep your word to the seniors in your State.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware.

THOMAS R. CARPER WATER RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT ACT OF 2024

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, on behalf of the majority leader, I ask the Chair to execute the order of December 12 with respect to the House message to accompany S. 4367.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Chair lays before the Senate the following message from the House:

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Resolved, That the bill from the Senate (S. 4367) entitled "An Act to provide for improvements to the rivers and harbors of the United States, to provide for the conservation and development of water and related resources, and for other purposes.", do pass with an amendment.

MOTION TO CONCUR

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, I move to concur in the House amendment to S. 4367.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will be up to 1 hour, equally divided.

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, I would like to yield to the gentlewoman from West Virginia.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia.

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. President, I rise today in strong support of the House amendment to S. 4367.

What my compadre over on EPW did not mention is the name of the bill. The name of the bill is the Thomas R. Carper Water Resources Development Act of 2024. And I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of this important legislation.

Just last week, the House approved this bill by an overwhelming margin of 399 to 18. This bipartisan legislation is supported by a diverse group of more than 200 stakeholders, which illustrates the positive impact that the legislation will have on communities across this country.

I just want to spend a few minutes kind of discussing the great work of my colleagues in Congress and the benefits that the American people will have by the provisions in this bill.

At the heart of the legislation is the Water Resources Development Act of 2024. The enactment of biennial water resources legislation over the last 10 years has been critical to addressing the Nation's water resources needs.

In August, the Senate passed its version of this legislation by unanimous consent. That bill was developed based on more than 1,000 requests submitted by our colleagues on both sides of the aisle. Following Senate passage, Chairman CARPER and I worked with Chairman SAM GRAVES and Ranking Member RICK LARSEN of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee to resolve the differences between the House and Senate-passed WRDA bill.

I am proud of the agreement that we were able to reach, and I want to thank my House colleagues for being such great partners. I would like to highlight some of the benefits of the WRDA 2024 bill.

It authorizes critical water resource studies and projects across the country. These studies and projects will support navigation along our waterways and at our ports. It will protect

communities from flooding and improve our environment.

This bill avoids one-size-fits-all solutions and maintains important flexibilities so that the Corps of Engineers and non-Federal partners can continue to address the unique water resources challenges across our Nation.

It also contains directives to the Corps to develop comprehensive implementation plans for this bill and for our prior WRDAs. This will enable the Corps to focus its energy and resources on fully implementing WRDA and prior WRDA provisions in order to better reflect the intent of this body and this Congress and previous Congresses.

I also want to highlight some of the ways this bill will help directly benefit my State of West Virginia. Just over 8 years ago, in June 2016, West Virginia experienced flooding in historic rates, which led to tragic deaths and devastation. This bill provides support for future projects identified by the Corps' feasibility study for flood risk management in the Kanawha River basin.

The legislation also increases the ability of the Corps to carry out smaller projects for emergency streambank and shoreline protection, ecosystem restoration, and debris and obstruction removal, which are critical to many areas of my State.

The bill also directs the Corps to expedite feasibility studies for the Upper Guyandotte and Kanawha River basins as well as to expedite projects in Milton as well as the Bluestone Dam in Hinton.

This bill supports many drinking water and wastewater projects throughout our State.

WRDA contains similar wins for States all across this Nation.

I am also glad to see, as part of this package, the Economic Development Reauthorization Act of 2024. The Economic Development Administration is tasked with facilitating economic development and creating jobs in distressed communities across the country. While EDA programs receive annual appropriations from Congress, the authorization for these projects expired in 2008. The legislation reauthorizes EDA programs at fiscally responsible levels for fiscal years 2025 through 2029.

This legislation reasserts congressional direction over EDA's funding decision; it enhances our oversight at the Agency; it preserves locally driven economic development decisions; and it ensures that funding from EDA is accessible to distressed communities.

It also codifies and authorizes dedicated funding for EDA's Assistance to Coal Communities Program, which was one of my top priorities for this legislation. This program ensures that communities in my home State of West Virginia which were decimated by the downturn of the coal industry have the resources that we need to recover and grow.

The bill also includes consideration of coal communities when EDA assigns EDA representatives. The legislation

also reauthorizes the regional Commissions that were expiring or have expired, and it expands the types of activities that those Commissions can carry out in their communities and modernizes their administrative procedures.

The bill also includes a provision to increase transparency and reduce waste across our Federal real estate portfolio.

And finally, the bill contains a provision that unlocks a significant backlog of funding in the TIFIA Program and provides the funding States need to use for transportation projects. It also includes provisions to prevent the backlog from occurring in the future.

In closing, I would really like to take a minute to thank the staff and my chairman, Chairman CARPER. But I also want to thank the staff at the various Federal Agencies that have helped with this legislation—helped us formulate it—and also the House and Senate legislative counsel. And I would like to thank as well the staff at the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee as well.

I want to extend my appreciation to the EPW Subcommittee on Transportation and Infrastructure led by Chairman MARK KELLY and Ranking Member KEVIN CRAMER for their and their staff's dedication to this.

I also want to thank, again, my friend Chairman CARPER. We have worked together—this is our, I think, second WRDA bill that we did together, and it is a fitting tribute to your decades of public service to have this piece of legislation named after you.

From Chairman CARPER's staff, I would like to thank Courtney Taylor, John Kane, Linnea Saby, Nicole Comisky, Ryan Smith, Claire Shanklin, Jordan Smallwood, and Tara Kroft. I would like to thank my staff seated behind me, many of them: Adam Tomlinson, Murphie Barrett, Libby Callaway, Dan Linkowski, Katherine Scarlett, Rebecca Hattar, Dom Rupp, and Jack Cline.

I strongly encourage my colleagues to support the House amendment to S. 4367, the Thomas R. Carper Water Resources Development Act.

TRIBUTE TO MITCH MCCONNELL

Mr. President, with the permission of the chairman—I told him that I wanted to mention one last thing before his remarks—I want to talk on a separate topic. I would like to pay tribute to my friend, the senior Senator from Kentucky, and our stalwart Republican leader, MITCH MCCONNELL.

Leader MCCONNELL leaves the leadership table at the end of this Congress as the longest serving Senate party leader in U.S. history.

Resilience, patience, and determination—these are the qualities we will remember the McConnell era by, an era that continues due to his foresight in ensuring conservative principles rule the day in the highest Court of the land.

If I had to distill the senior Senator from Kentucky's leadership style down

to twin pillars, I would say they were focus and more focus. He says it is the most important word in the dictionary for a reason.

As a member of his broader leadership team from my early days in the Senate and now as a member of the core leadership team as the Senate Republican conference vice chairman, Leader MCCONNELL has taught me many valuable lessons and values in his leadership.

One of the first lessons was that Kentuckians and West Virginians share more than a border; we also share a distinct sense of humor. Leader MCCONNELL leads with a sharp wit. His regular jokes at the leadership table will be missed. For example, he used to call former Senator Richard Shelby "Too Big to Fail."

Leader MCCONNELL leads with humility. He will be the first to remind you of his initial flop on the national stage when his idol, Ronald Reagan, called him Mitch O'Donnell.

Leader MCCONNELL leads with consistency. He has never missed a blue shirt Thursday.

And he leads with a tough eye, for sure. He has taken countless slings and arrows for his party and this institution, and all the while, I think he thoroughly enjoyed it.

He reminds me of my dad in a way. They both have framed cartoons of some of their biggest critics in their office.

He leads with moral and philosophical clarity. During more than a few of his 18 years, I am sure he will agree being majority leader was perhaps the hardest job in the country. He often referred to his job as that of a gravekeeper: Everyone may be under him, but nobody is listening.

I thank him for the unity he maintained and the clarity of his leadership.

So after 18 years atop Senate Republican politics, he leaves an indelible mark. I believe that the senior Senator calls that the long game. And as we know, he is not leaving the Senate; he will just be leading in different ways. He will return to the Henry Clay desk, a fitting place for him to finish his life's work here in the Senate. There, he will be continuing to face our national challenges with the same steely, conservative resolve that we have so grown accustomed to.

Between the demanding roles of the Rules Committee and the Defense Appropriations Subcommittee, I am confident he will stay busy, and he has assured us that he will continue to thoroughly disappoint his critics.

So thank you, Leader MCCONNELL, for your leadership and your service as the Nation's longest serving Senate party leader.

I thank the chairman of our committee, Chairman CARPER, for letting me give this tribute to our departing Republican leader.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware.

S. 4367

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, before we vote on WRDA this afternoon, I

want to express my strong support for this bill, S. 4367, which my friend and colleague SHELLEY MOORE CAPITO has graciously named in my honor.

You could have knocked me over with a feather when we came to the end of the markup a couple of months ago in our committee on this legislation, and I asked if any of our members had another amendment they wanted to offer. No one spoke up but you, and you said that you would like to offer an amendment to name this bill in my honor.

It is undeserved but very much appreciated as I prepare to weigh anchor, as we say in the Navy, and sail off into the sunrise with my wife Martha.

The Thomas R. Carper Water Resources Development Act of 2024, also known as WRDA—Water Resources Development Act—is the product of not days, not weeks, but months of hard work and partnership with you, Senator CAPITO, and your staff gathered here today as well as our House colleagues Congressman SAM GRAVES and Congressman RICK LARSEN.

This year, I am pleased to say that our legislation includes far more—far more—than just the WRDA legislation itself. This package also reauthorizes the Economic Development Administration for the first time in—get this—20 years. It also reauthorizes our Federal regional Commissions and includes important transportation and Federal building provisions to increase transparency and to reduce Federal waste.

Before we vote today, I would like to take a minute or two to discuss some of the important things this legislation will accomplish, if enacted, for the American people.

First, this legislation continues the tradition of timely passage of the Water Resources Development Act. As Senator CAPITO knows, we try to do this legislation, pass this legislation, formulate this legislation, every 2 years. We were right on the money, too, in terms of meeting that schedule.

Some of our colleagues know I am a Navy guy, the last Vietnam veteran serving in the U.S. Senate. Having said that, I have a deep respect for the Army Corps of Engineers. I like to say: Navy and Army—different uniforms but the same team.

In my State and, frankly, I think in all 50 States, the Army Corps of Engineers does extraordinary work for the American people. For example, the Corps manages our Nation's ports, our waterways, and our coastal systems. The work of the Corps is essential for sustaining America's commerce, while protecting our environment and our communities. The Corps restores our ecosystems in critical areas such as the bayous in Louisiana and the Everglades in Florida, which are home to not only a number of endangered species but are indispensable parts of our agricultural supply chain as well. The Corps also advances flood and storm management solutions across our country to protect vulnerable communities

like the bay beaches of Delaware. As the largest manager of our Nation's water infrastructure, the Corps and the biennial WRDA bill play a critical role in job creation, job retention, and in growth as well.

Enactment of the Water Resources Development Act of 2024 is essential for enabling the Army Corps of Engineers to meet the needs of communities throughout America. WRDA 2024 strengthens the Corps' ability to address diverse water resource needs throughout America. In fact, it authorizes water infrastructure projects, studies, and programs that will impact all 50 States. Let me say again. It will impact not just our States, not just the States that are represented on Environment and Public Works—all 50 States.

Every Senator in this body had the opportunity to participate with us on the committee to help make sure the views and needs of their States are reflected in this bill.

There are I think something like 200 feasibility studies and some 22 new or modified construction projects that are covered in this legislation.

Additionally, WRDA 2024 directs the Corps to expedite implementation of authorities provided by Congress in prior WRDAs. Increasingly powerful hurricanes, rising sea levels, and record temperatures underscore the need for the Corps to develop and execute a plan to fully implement past reauthorizations as soon as possible in order to better protect our communities. The water resource challenges facing our communities are already growing in number, and this bill will help us address it.

Additionally, WRDA 2024 also contains a full reauthorization of the Economic Development Administration for the first time in 20 years. Let me say that again—for the first time in 20 years.

Some will recall that the Economic Development Administration, or EDA, is a Federal Agency that invests in the development of distressed communities across America. Through its grant programs, the Economic Development Administration helps local communities plan for economic development activities, construct "last-mile" infrastructure, and mitigate the effects of short- and long-term economic challenges and disasters.

By reauthorizing this Agency, EDA, we have the opportunity to modernize this legislation, WRDA. We also have the opportunity to modernize the Economic Development Administration for today's challenges, while improving its ability to foster economic growth and build resilient supply chains.

WRDA 2024 also authorizes and updates the laws pertaining to certain Federal and regional Commissions and will establish two new regional Commissions—the mid-Atlantic regional Commission and the Southern New England regional Commission. The mid-Atlantic regional Commission includes Delaware under its purview.

Finally, WRDA 2024 includes important provisions to increase transparency and accountability, while also reducing Federal waste at the Department of Transportation and General Services Administration.

As we move today to consider the Water Resources Development Act of 2024, I am reminded of an old proverb that goes something like this: If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to travel far, go together.

That is what we have done. We have gone together. With this bill, I am proud to say we have chosen consciously that approach.

That is how we should approach much of our work in Congress—by reaching across the aisle to work together and find lasting solutions where possible to the problems we face as a nation. After all, bipartisan solutions are lasting solutions.

The bill before us today is a result of that partnership—not only between Members but also between our staffs.

Before I conclude today, I want to say thank you to Senator CAPITO's staff. She was nice enough to mention the names of some of the members of our staff on the majority side. I also want to mention the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers congressional affairs staff and the staff of the Senate legislative counsel. That includes Adam Tomlinson, Murphie Barrett, Libby Callaway, Dan Linkowski, Dom Rupp, Katherine Scarlett, Brett Jortland, Jack Cline, Dave Wethington, Amy Klein, Deanna Edwards, and Mark Mazzone.

I also want to take a moment and acknowledge the members of my own staff on the majority side and to thank them from the bottom of my heart for all their work, including late nights and long hours. Among them are Linnea Saby, Ryan Smith, Claire Shanklin, Jordan Baugh, Nicole Comisky, Jordan Smallwood, Tara Kroft, Courtney Taylor, and their leader John Kane.

In closing, let me urge all of our colleagues to join Senator CAPITO and me in supporting what we believe is an excellent bill—certainly not because my name is associated with it but because every State stands to benefit from the provisions it contains.

I close and add one last quick note. Almost every day, I travel back and forth on the train from Delaware to Washington. I talk to people coming and going. One of the things I hear the most is: Why can't you guys work together and get stuff done in Washington, the House and the Senate?

This legislation is living proof that we can do that and we can do it well. We have been doing it with this legislation for years and with a lot of other legislation that has emanated and come out of the Environment and Public Works Committee.

I want to commend Senator CAPITO for working with me and our Democratic and Republican colleagues to help make that happen, again, for the last 2 years.

In closing, let me urge all our colleagues to join Senator CAPITO and me in supporting what we believe is an excellent bill—certainly not because, again, of my name but because every State—every single State—stands to benefit from the provisions this legislation contains.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Ms. DUCKWORTH. I ask unanimous consent to yield back all time.

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

VOTE ON MOTION

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

Mr. MURPHY. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) is necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the senator from Ohio (Mr. VANCE).

The result was announced—yeas 97, nays 1, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 327 Leg.]

YEAS—97

Baldwin	Grassley	Reed
Barrasso	Hagerty	Ricketts
Bennet	Hassan	Risch
Blackburn	Hawley	Romney
Blumenthal	Heinrich	Rosen
Booker	Hickenlooper	Rounds
Boozman	Hirono	Rubio
Braun	Hoeven	Sanders
Britt	Hyde-Smith	Schatz
Brown	Johnson	Schiff
Budd	Kaine	Schmitt
Cantwell	Kelly	Schumer
Capito	Kennedy	Scott (FL)
Cardin	Kim	Scott (SC)
Carper	King	Shaheen
Casey	Klobuchar	Sinema
Cassidy	Lankford	Smith
Collins	Lujan	Sullivan
Coons	Lummis	Tester
Cornyn	Manchin	Thune
Cortez Masto	Markey	Tillis
Cotton	Marshall	Tuberville
Cramer	McConnell	Van Hollen
Crapo	Merkley	Warner
Cruz	Moran	Warnock
Daines	Mullin	Warren
Duckworth	Murkowski	Welch
Durbin	Murphy	Whitehouse
Ernst	Murray	Wicker
Fetterman	Ossoff	Wyden
Fischer	Padilla	Young
Gillibrand	Paul	
Graham	Peters	

NAYS—1

Lee

NOT VOTING—2

Stabenow Vance

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. HANSEN). On this vote, the yeas are 97, the nays are 1.

The 60-vote threshold having been achieved, the motion to concur is agreed to.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Hawaii.

THE CALENDAR

Ms. HIRONO. Madam President, notwithstanding rule XXII, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of the following bills, en bloc: Calendar No. 617, H.R. 6062, and Calendar No. 393, S. 2615.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bills en bloc.

Ms. HIRONO. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the bills be considered read a third time and passed and that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, all en bloc.

PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The bills passed, en bloc, as follows:

RESTORING THE ABILITY OF THE PEOPLE OF AMERICAN SAMOA TO APPROVE AMENDMENTS TO THE TERRITORIAL CONSTITUTION BASED ON MAJORITY RULE IN A DEMOCRATIC ACT OF SELF-DETERMINATION, AS AUTHORIZED PURSUANT TO AN ACT OF CONGRESS DELEGATING ADMINISTRATION OF FEDERAL TERRITORIAL LAW IN THE TERRITORY TO THE PRESIDENT, AND TO THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR UNDER EXECUTIVE ORDER 10264, DATED JUNE 29, 1951, UNDER WHICH THE CONSTITUTION OF AMERICAN SAMOA WAS APPROVED AND MAY BE AMENDED WITHOUT REQUIREMENT FOR FURTHER CONGRESSIONAL ACTION, SUBJECT TO THE AUTHORITY OF CONGRESS UNDER THE TERRITORIAL CLAUSE IN ARTICLE IV, SECTION 3, CLAUSE 2 OF THE UNITED STATES CONSTITUTION

A bill (H.R. 6062) to restore the ability of the people of American Samoa to approve amendments to the territorial constitution based on majority rule in a democratic act of self-determination, as authorized pursuant to an Act of Congress delegating administration of Federal territorial law in the territory to the President, and to the Secretary of the Interior under Executive Order 10264, dated June 29, 1951, under which the Constitution of American Samoa was approved and may be amended without requirement for further congressional action, subject to the authority of Congress under the Territorial Clause in article IV, section 3, clause 2 of the United States Constitution, which had been reported from the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, was ordered to a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

ALASKA NATIVE VILLAGE MUNICIPAL LANDS RESTORATION ACT OF 2023

A bill (S. 2615) to amend the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act to provide that Village Corporations shall not be required to convey land in trust to the State of Alaska for the establishment of Municipal Corporations, and for other purposes, which had been reported from the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed, as follows:

S. 2615

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Alaska Native Village Municipal Lands Restoration Act of 2023”.

SEC. 2. REVERSION OF CERTAIN LAND CONVEYED IN TRUST TO THE STATE OF ALASKA.

Section 14(c) of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (43 U.S.C. 1613(c)) is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraphs (1) through (5) as subparagraphs (A) through (E), respectively, and indenting appropriately;

(2) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A) (as so redesignated), by striking “(c) Each patent” and inserting the following:

“(c) CONVEYANCE OF CERTAIN LAND BY VILLAGE CORPORATION.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Each patent”;

(3) in paragraph (1) (as so designated), in the undesignated matter following subparagraph (E) (as so redesignated), in the first sentence—

(A) by striking “section 14(c) of this Act” and inserting “this subsection”; and

(B) by striking “There is authorized” and inserting the following:

“(2) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—There are authorized”;

(4) in paragraph (2)(A) (as so redesignated), in the second sentence, by striking “The Secretary” and inserting the following:

“(B) FORM OF FUNDING.—The Secretary”;

and

(5) in paragraph (1) (as so designated)—

(A) in each of subparagraphs (A) and (B) (as so redesignated)—

(i) by striking “the” the first place it appears and inserting “The”; and

(ii) by striking the semicolon at the end and inserting a period;

(B) in subparagraph (D) (as so redesignated), by striking “the” the first place it appears and inserting “The”;

(C) by striking “existed as of” in subparagraph (D) (as so redesignated) and all that follows through “for” in subparagraph (E) (as so redesignated) and inserting the following: “existed as of December 18, 1971.

“(E) For”; and

(D) in subparagraph (C) (as so redesignated)—

(i) by striking the semicolon at the end and inserting a period;

(ii) by striking “in trust: *Provided, however, That the word*” and all that follows through “sentence,” and inserting the following: “in trust.

“(II) DEFINITION OF SALE.—For purposes of subclause (I), the term ‘sale’”;

(iii) by striking “one thousand two hundred and eighty acres: *Provided further, That any net*” and inserting the following: “1,280 acres.

“(iii) NET REVENUES.—

“(I) IN GENERAL.—Any net”;

(iv) by striking “community needs: *Provided, That the*” and inserting the following: “community needs.

“(ii) MINIMUM ACREAGE.—The”;

(v) by striking “(C) the Village Corporation” and inserting the following:

“(C) CONVEYANCE TO MUNICIPAL CORPORATION OR THE STATE IN TRUST.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—The Village Corporation”;

and

(vi) by adding at the end the following:

“(iv) CASES IN WHICH CONVEYANCE SHALL NOT BE REQUIRED.—

“(I) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of this subparagraph, if a Village Corporation, prior to the date of enactment of the Alaska Native Village Municipal Lands Restoration Act of 2023, conveyed to the State in trust all or a portion of the acreage of land required to be conveyed under this subparagraph for the establishment of a Municipal Corporation in the future, and a Municipal Corporation has not been established as of that date of enactment, on formal resolution by the Village Corporation and the residents of the Native village requesting dissolution of the trust, the trust shall be dissolved and title to the land shall revert to the Village Corporation, subject to subclause (III).

“(II) ADDITIONAL LAND.—Notwithstanding any other provision of this subparagraph, as of the date of enactment of the Alaska Native Village Municipal Lands Restoration Act of 2023, a Village Corporation shall not be required to convey any additional land in trust under this subparagraph for the establishment of a Municipal Corporation in the future.

“(III) REQUIREMENTS.—In accordance with subsection (g)—

“(aa) the reversion of land to a Village Corporation pursuant to subclause (I) shall be subject to—

“(AA) valid existing rights created by the applicable trust; and

“(BB) any existing easements, rights-of-way necessary for public roadway access, or rights-of-way for access of holders of valid existing rights; and

“(bb) the Village Corporation shall assume the obligations of the applicable trust with respect to any lease or other use agreement applicable to the land on reversion of the land to the Village Corporation pursuant to subclause (I).”.

Ms. HIRONO. Madam President, this package contains two bills with broad, bipartisan support. One of those bills, H.R. 6062, is sponsored by Delegate AMATA RADEWAGEN of American Samoa. This bill will repeal a requirement that the Constitution of American Samoa can only be amended by an Act of Congress.

Repealing this provision will allow the people of American Samoa to amend their Territorial constitution without further congressional action, a right that they had before 1983.

In 2022, American Samoa held a constitutional convention and approved 5 of 11 proposed constitutional amendments. This marked the first time voters had approved amendments since the 1983 change requiring congressional approval. These amendments have been pending congressional action since December 2022. There is no need for further delay. We restore American Samoa’s self-determination in their constitutional matters by passing H.R. 6062.

In addition to this important bill affecting American Samoa, this package includes a bill, S. 2615, sponsored by Representative MARY PELTOLA and