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U.S. SENATE DATE: TUESDAY, JULY 30, 2019

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS WASHINGTON, D.C.

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BUSINESS MEETING

TUESDAY, JULY 30, 2019

U.S. SENATE

Committee on Environment and Public Works

Washington, D.C.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:09 a.m. in room 406, Dirksen Senate Building, the Honorable John Barrasso [chairman of the committee] presiding.

Present: Senators Barrasso, Carper, Inhofe, Capito, Cramer, Braun, Rounds, Boozman, Wicker, Shelby, Ernst, Cardin, Whitehouse, Merkley, Duckworth, Van Hollen.

STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE JOHN BARRASSO, A UNITED STATES  
SENATOR FROM THE STATE OF WYOMING

Senator Barrasso. Good morning. I call this business meeting to order.

Today we are going to consider two bills and six General Services Administration resolutions. Senator Carper and I have agreed that we will actually begin voting at 9:45. At that time I will call up the items on the agenda. So we are not going to debate the items on the agenda while we are voting. Instead, we will debate the items on the agenda before we begin voting.

I would also be happy to recognize any members who still wish to speak after the voting concludes.

This morning, we will consider two pieces of legislation. The first is a Barrasso-Carper-Capito-Cardin substitute amendment to S. 2302, which is America's Transportation Infrastructure Act.

We will also take up S. 1992, which is a bill that I have introduced along with Ranking Member Carper to repeal a \$7.6 billion rescission in the Federal Aid Highway Program contract authority. I introduced America's Transportation Infrastructure Act along with our fellow leaders on the Environment and Public Works Committee, Ranking Member Carper, as well as Senators Capito and Cardin, who chair and rank on the Transportation Subcommittee. The legislation, as modified by the substitute

amendment by the four of us, will make a historic investment in our roads, will cut Washington red tape, it will keep communities safe, and will help continue to grow America's economy.

The bill authorizes \$287 billion from the Highway Trust Fund over the next five years. This is the most substantial highway infrastructure legislation in history. Of that money, \$259 billion, or 90 percent of the money, will go directly to our roads and bridges through the Highway Formula Funding, a program that has successfully worked in our States across the Country.

Formula funding gives each State the flexibility to address their specific surface transportation needs. By distributing the funding through this formula, the legislation will help every State in the Nation and keep projects moving ahead. It is good for rural areas, it is good for urban communities, it is good across the Country.

So between new authorizations, loan leveraging programs, State match requirements, and likely additions from the Commerce and Banking Committees, our bill's total impact on infrastructure will be nearly half a trillion dollars, which is a historic total. The bill will speed up project delivery, will cut Washington red tape so projects can be done faster and better and cheaper and smarter. It codifies key elements of

President Trump's One Federal Decision policy, so the approval process for States is simplified.

It also gives States increased flexibility and reduces their paperwork burdens. Important safety road projects, which take months to build, shouldn't take a decade to permit.

The legislation would promote innovation and incorporate new technologies into road construction and management to expedite project delivery. Increasing safety is a top priority throughout the entire legislation.

The legislation includes grant programs to incentivize States to lower the total number of driver and pedestrian deaths from car accidents. It also establishes a pilot program to build highway wildlife crossings to help mitigate the dangers created when animals cross major roads.

America's Transportation Infrastructure Act establishes a competitive grant program to address the backlog of bridges in poor condition. Our bill will help build more durable roads that can withstand extreme weather events like floods, natural disasters such as wildfires and earthquakes and rockslides.

The bill will also expedite the permitting of gathering lines on federal land, and with tribal consent, Indian land as well. Gathering lines are small pipelines that help capture methane and reduce the venting and flaring of natural gas. They also help reduce heavy duty truck traffic servicing oil and gas

wells. This provision is good for the environment and for American energy production and for public safety.

This bill will also help reduce emissions from our transportation infrastructure by creating voluntary programs for States and reauthorizing successful programs like the Diesel Emissions Reduction Act. It also include the USE IT Act, standing for Utilizing Significant Emissions with Innovative Technologies, something that has already passed through this committee.

Ranking Member Carper and I agree, this legislation must be paid for. We will work with Senate Finance Committee Chairman Grassley and Ranking Member Wyden to pay for the bill. One way to help pay for it is to ensure every driver using the roads is contributing to maintaining them. Right now, drivers of electrical vehicles don't contribute to the Highway Trust Fund.

An electric car puts as much wear and tear on the roads as any other vehicle. They need to pay their fair share in terms of a user fee for electric vehicles. Everyone who drives on our roads should continue to contribute, and if they are not contributing now, should contribute to the maintenance.

The legislation will grow our economy, will create jobs, and will improve the quality of life for the American people. I want to thank Ranking Member Carper and Subcommittee Chairman Capito, Subcommittee Ranking Member Cardin, and all the members

of this committee for their partnership in writing this bill. America's Transportation Infrastructure Act is bipartisan, it is substantial, and it will help the entire Country.

Introduced yesterday, the bill already has support from a number of organizations: the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the National Association of Manufacturers, the American Highway Users Alliance, the American Road and Transportation Builders Association, the American Council of Engineering Companies, the National Stone, Sand and Gravel Association, the National American Concrete Alliance, the American Trucking Association, and many more.

Today, we are also going to consider legislation to repeal Section 1438 of the FAST Act, which rescinds \$7.6 billion in federal aid highway program contract authority on July 1st of 2020. Ranking Member Carper and I agree that if this rescission isn't repealed, it will harm States, it will slow the economy, and it will cost jobs. We can't let that happen.

Lastly, we will consider six resolutions to approve prospectuses providing for General Services Administration leases.

I now would like to turn to Ranking Member Carper for his opening statement.

[The prepared statement of Senator Barrasso follows:]

STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE THOMAS R. CARPER, A UNITED STATES  
SENATOR FROM THE STATE OF DELAWARE

Senator Carper. Thanks, Mr. Chairman. To our colleagues and everyone in the audience, welcome and good morning.

I want to begin today just by saying, Mr. Chairman, that under your leadership the members of this committee and our staffs have been hard at work on this bill, as you know, for much of this year. I am enormously proud of the commitment and the unrelenting spirit of bipartisanship that have made today's business meeting possible.

America's Transportation Infrastructure Act will reauthorize our Nation's surface transportation laws, and pave the way for an historical \$287 billion investment in our Nation's roads, our highways and our bridges in years to come. The fact that a bill as significant as this one also happens to be bipartisan really should not come as a great surprise to anyone. Because in the greatest sense, our Nation's transportation infrastructure helps bring all Americans together, both literally and figuratively. Our roads, our highways, our bridges, connect us to one another.

What we sought to do in this bill before us today is to address in a meaningful way a number of serious challenges across our transportation infrastructure, challenges that include but go well beyond filling potholes. For example, we

know that the cars, trucks, and vans that we drive have now become our Nation's largest source of global warming pollution. These emissions accelerate and exacerbate the effect of climate change, contributing to the increasingly extreme weather events that contribute significantly to the degradation of our roadways and our bridges.

Our legislation includes the first ever climate title in a transportation bill. It calls for an investment of \$10 billion over the next five years to combat climate change by reducing emissions, by improving the resilience of our transportation networks, and supporting the growing market for alternative fuel vehicles.

Additionally, we need to do more to improve the safety of our roads. In 2017, there were more than 37,000 fatalities, 37,000 fatalities, on our Nation's roadways. That included pedestrians and people on bicycles. That is a number of people greater than the population of either Dover, Delaware, our State's capital, or Laramie, Wyoming.

Our legislation addresses this carnage by investing more than \$3 billion per year in safety improvements through existing programs. Our bill creates and funds a new program that will compel States and cities with very high rates of pedestrian and bicycle fatalities to make needed safety improvements. We also included funding to better facilitate wildlife crossings, as the

chairman has mentioned, and reduce the risk of collisions with animals.

Finally, perhaps, the greatest challenge of all is in our Nation's Highway Trust Fund is operating on the brink of bankruptcy. The highway account is running an \$11 billion annual deficit, and that deficit is growing. The truth is, not only is our Highway Trust Fund going broke, our way of paying for it is broken as well.

Although this committee does not have jurisdiction over the revenues to pay for this bill, in the spirit of identifying a long-term fix to the solvency of the Highway Trust Fund, our legislation would continue to fund the State level vehicle miles traveled pilot programs established in 2015. Notably, our legislation also includes a national vehicle miles traveled pilot program, the first of its kind.

The last five-year reauthorization bill, the FAST Act, was largely paid for by a series of largely irresponsible budget gimmicks. One of these gimmicks was the rescission of \$7.6 billion worth of contract authority set to take effect this time next year. This resolution is causing tremendous uncertainty for States, for cities, and for businesses. We need to fix it.

Today, we have the opportunity to do that. And we are considering a separate bill today, in addition to our reauthorization bill, to repeal this rescission. I hope that we

will be able to pass this important fix before the start of the next fiscal year and to remove the cloud of uncertainty shrouding States as they try to play projects for the coming year.

I want to conclude this opening statement by reiterating my thanks to our chairman, John Barrasso, to Senators Capito and Cardin, and to each member of this committee, and to the members of our staff. We don't do this stuff ourselves, as you know. And a lot of good work has been done by the people sitting behind me, and out in the audience watching as well. I look forward to working closely in the months ahead with our colleagues on other committees of jurisdiction in order to bring a comprehensive transportation bill to the Floor next year, and to ensure that this bill is paid for in a responsible way.

America's Transportation Infrastructure Act will help make real revision of a safer, better connected, efficient and climate friendly transportation system, one that will endure the test of time and enable America to keep with the evolving demands of the world's biggest economy.

When the voters of Great Britain unceremoniously sent former Prime Minister Winston Churchill packing at 10 Downing Street, following the end of World War II, he was asked as he left 10 Downing Street by a reporter, Mr. Churchill, for you, is this the end. That is what he said, Mr. Churchill, for you, is this

the end. Churchill seriously responded; he said, "This is not the end, this is not the beginning of the end, this is the end of the beginning." And so it is for us today, the end of the beginning. This business meeting marks the beginning of what is likely to be a journey with more than a few twists and turns, but it is a good beginning, and one that we can be proud of.

I look forward to working in the months ahead with all of our colleagues on this committee and over in the House, in the Senate, the Administration and a multitude of stakeholders to make it even better, to make a good start even better. I don't know a lot of Latin, but two of the words I do know are *carpe diem*, seize the day. Or as they say in Delaware, *Carper Diem*.

[Laughter.]

Senator Carper. Let's go get them. Thanks very much.

[The prepared statement of Senator Carper follows:]

Senator Barrasso. Senator Capito.

STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE SHELLEY MOORE CAPITO, A UNITED STATES  
SENATOR FROM THE STATE OF WEST VIRGINIA

Senator Capito. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to thank everybody here. When I was on the House side, for 14 years, I served on the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee. The reauthorization of this bill and the way that we have changed it over the years is always an exciting time, and it certainly is that way in this committee today.

I was going to say to Senator Carper, in West Virginia, it is Capito Diem, but it didn't have the right ring to it.

[Laughter.]

Senator Barrasso. Cardin Diem is coming.

[Laughter.]

Senator Capito. It is Cardin Diem in Maryland, yes. Anyway, I want to thank both Senators Barrasso and Carper and also Senator Cardin for the good, hard work to get this legislation where we see it today. It authorizes our Nation's surface transportation infrastructure \$287 billion over five years. The scale and duration of this bill is essential to improving the roads.

Americans count on it to safely and efficiently get to work, get to school, to the store, to drive on the family vacation, and to enable commerce on our freight corridors. Every member of this committee has heard loud and clear from our

States' departments of transportation that a long-term bill is needed to prevent a return to the stop and start, short-term bills that preceded the FAST Act and undermined their construction planning.

I will say anecdotally, I had a telephone town hall meeting. Of the 13 questions that I took, 4 of them had to do with transportation. So this gets to every home.

Ninety percent of the bill's funding will be allocated via formula, and every State's share is protected. All boats will rise with this funding increase. Our States will have maximum flexibility which they request, and we tried to provide, to direct their investments where they know they are needed, rather than at the direction of Washington.

America's Transportation Infrastructure Act also includes important procedural reforms to the permitting process. We hear repeatedly how lengthy and timely and expensive it is, such as the One Federal Decision, to reduce costs and the seemingly endless delays that accompany transportation infrastructure package. I think our project stakeholders will be as excited about these provisions as they are about the additional funding.

The legislation's bridge investment program will facilitate investment in our Nation's crumbling and increasingly dangerous bridges, an infrastructure need that is often overlooked in favor of higher profile projects, like new or expanded stretches

of highway. I can say in my home State of West Virginia, 19 percent of our bridges are rated as structurally deficient. A dedicated source of bridge funding will help States like mine address bridge maintenance and replacement, keeping the public safe and preventing emergency closures from creating needless and long-lasting congestion.

I am also pleased that this legislation carries several provisions important to Appalachia. A balanced exchange program for States within the Appalachian Development Highway System will make more funding available to States working to complete their ADHS corridors, such as mine in Corridor H, through the heart of West Virginia.

States with unobligated ADHS balances that have shifted their transportation priorities will enjoy additional flexibility to invest in other federal highway system projects made whole by an existing funding source. This is truly a win-win for our part of the Country and all the Appalachian States involved.

America's Transportation Infrastructure Act also follows the FAST Act with another five-year reauthorization of the Appalachian Regional Commission, which by the way, my entire State is part of this. This language, which I wrote with the support of Ranking Member Cardin, Senator Wicker and Leader McConnell, aligns the ARC's reauthorization with its recent

appropriation history and doubles the set-aside for another passion of mine, rural broadband deployment in our region.

Another provision that I led with Leader McConnell authorizes the ARC to support the development of a petrochemical storage hub and its related downstream manufacturing, a potential game changer in terms of capital investment and job creation in central Appalachia.

I could go on and on, but I won't. America's Transportation Infrastructure Act has many more programs that I think will appeal to members on both sides of the aisle and from around the Country, not to mention all the States, families, and individuals that will benefit.

So I would like to thank my colleagues and their staffs I would like to particularly thank my staff member, Travis Cone, for his dedicated service and his ability to really work all of our other staff members to create a great product. I would particularly like to thank, too, from Chairman Barrasso's staff, Richard Russell, Brian Clifford, Carl Barrick, Juli Huynh, James Wilson, Steven Barnett and Elizabeth Horner. We all know here, sitting at the dais, that the strength of this bill and the compromises that have been achieved have been achieved with their good, hard work. So I want to thank your staffs as well.

This is a bipartisan solution to address key infrastructure needs and opportunities and I urge all members of the committee

to support this bill.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[The prepared statement of Senator Capito follows:]

Senator Barrasso. Thank you very much, Senator Capito.

Senator Cardin.

STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE BENJAMIN L. CARDIN, A UNITED STATES  
SENATOR FROM THE STATE OF MARYLAND

Senator Cardin. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I really do want to thank you and Senator Carper for establishing the climate where we could get to a bipartisan transportation reauthorization bill, and to Senator Capito, it has been a pleasure to work with you as the chair of our subcommittee.

It is natural that a Senator from West Virginia and Maryland would work together, because in the western part of our State, the transportation is critically important for economic reasons. It is appropriate that I be working very closely with the Senator from Delaware, because we understand DelMarVa, and the needs for transportation, so the two border States.

I don't want the chairman to be left out. The last time I was in Wyoming, I appreciated the fact that you put a safety into this bill. Because as I was rounding a bend, there was an American Bison buffalo right in front of me. So I hope we can get better warning signs out in Wyoming to deal with the dangers.

Anyway, this bill is an incredibly important bill, and it does represent the bipartisan work, not just of the four people that I have mentioned, the chair and ranking member of the full committee and subcommittee, the staff, I am so happy that Senator Capito mentioned the staff. They are the ones who stay

up late at night, they are the ones who have to deal with our extra requests that we put in at the last moment to make sure it is dealt with.

But also, every member of this committee, and their input into this process, we thank you for that. Because this has truly been a collaborative effort. And it is a product that we can proudly support.

As Senator Carper mentioned, this is the first surface transportation reauthorization bill that includes a climate title. I am glad that it does. It is the reality of more severe weather. We have to deal with resiliency and adaptation. That is our responsibility.

Just this last month, we saw a record amount of rainfall in this region that caused flooding of major highways during rush hour. We have to be able to deal with the realities of more severe weather. This bill recognizes that transportation is the leading source for greenhouse gas emissions, and we have a responsibility in the reauthorization to try to reduce the amount of greenhouse gases that are emitted.

I think the infrastructure, particularly for electric and alternative fueled vehicles, represents not only our commitment to deal with the greenhouse gas emissions, but also to deal with the realities of consumer preference. These are vehicles that they want, and we have to make sure the infrastructure that we

do for tomorrow meets the needs of consumers in these types of vehicles. We give lots of discretion to local officials to come up with initiatives to deal with these issues, from using natural infrastructure to promoting walking and bicycling.

The bill also deals with congestion. Now, if you are a Senator from Maryland who happens to live in Baltimore that commutes every day to Washington, believe me, congestion is on my mind twice a day. I recognize that we have severe problems, not just here in this region, but throughout the Country.

Delays and lost fuel have been estimated on an annual basis to be as high as \$300 billion a year in lost productivity in this Country. The fact that we are devoting resources to dealing with congestion makes a great deal of sense.

There is a provision in here that I particularly want to acknowledge. It identifies and removes highway facilities that divide and isolate communities. We have to recognize that some highways that were built no longer function, and we should do things to make sure that our system is efficient and represents the needs of the community.

I am particularly pleased, Mr. Chairman, that we have increased the funds that go to the Transportation Alternative Program. Senator Wicker has been my partner on this. I appreciate his help, so that local communities can have more input into their own needs as far as safety and tourism and

walking and trails and biking and things like that.

There is a section that deals with freight. Freight is an extremely important part of our objectives on our infrastructure reauthorization bill. Just this past week, Secretary Chao announced an INFRA grant to Baltimore for replacing a train tunnel that is about 120 years old to allow for double stacking, which is the way that freight moves up the coast. Yes, it is important to Maryland, it will mean jobs. But it is important for our entire region, for a more efficient freight system.

It also helps, by the way, the truck traffic, because of the delays we have in the Port of Baltimore, wasting fuel and wasting truckers' time. So all that will be helped, and this section provides additional resources for the freight traffic here in the Country.

I already mentioned the safety issues, which I am very pleased we are giving initiatives for safety. And I want to just second the comment of Senator Capito in regard to the Appalachian Regional Commission and the work that is done here in the reauthorization. It was a pleasure to work with her. I also want to acknowledge Senator Wicker's work on that.

As Senator Carper said, this bill is a bill that I am proud to support. I want to make sure it moves forward. We know we still have more work to do, not necessarily under the jurisdiction of this committee, but we have more work to do. So

many of us serve on other committees that are involved in the transportation reauthorization, including the Finance Committee, which is going to have to come up with the financing. I am glad that Senator Carper is on that committee, and can figure out all those problems.

But we also have several other members who serve on the Finance Committee and serve on the Banking Committee and serve on the other committees that are involved. Let's get this bill not only out of this committee, but let's get this bill through the Congress and to the President. It is desperately needed, and I am proud to be part of it.

Mr. Chairman, on an unrelated matter, we are going to be considering resolutions today. You were kind enough to hold back resolutions that I asked for to get clarification from GSA, dealing with the 2018 and 2019 consolidation activities program. I did hear from GSA that assured me that none of these funds are for the FBI new headquarters. I would ask consent that that letter be made part of the record, and I intend to support those resolutions.

Senator Barrasso. Without objection.

[The referenced information follows:]

Senator Cardin. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Senator Cardin follows:]

Senator Barrasso. First, I am going to call on Senator Boozman, since he was the first one here today and asked to speak generically on the bill. Then we will head to other members with regard to amendments. Yes, Senator.

STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE JOHN BOOZMAN, A UNITED STATES SENATOR  
FROM THE STATE OF ARKANSAS

Senator Boozman. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to thank the big four for making this possible. Chairman Barrasso, Ranking Member Carper, Senator Capito and Senator Cardin, I know how hard you have worked on this. Again, thanks to your staff on both sides that have worked in a very collaborative fashion. If it weren't for the bipartisanship that has been shown, we simply wouldn't have gotten this done. I think it is a great example for the rest of Congress.

Our national economy thrives in part because of how interconnected the United States has been throughout its history. The ability to efficiently move goods and services across the Country is a critical factor as to why the U.S. has been able to compete and thrive within the global marketplace.

America's Transportation Infrastructure Act of 2019 is certainly a vital investment in our Country. A safe, efficient transportation network is fundamentally necessary to our quality of life and our economy. This legislation provides long-term certainty for States, local governments, along with good reforms and improvements to the programs that sustain our roads and bridges. Further, American's Transportation Infrastructure Act will improve upon safety, resiliency, while still ensuring the economy can grow and thrive for years to come.

Our infrastructure needs can't be a partisan issue. Now is the time to push ahead and make sensible, productive investments in our Nation's infrastructure. We can no longer kick the can down the road and ignore infrastructure problems. It is time for the United States to be realistic about its infrastructure investment shortfall and start investing in infrastructure improvements today.

One thing I also want to thank the big four for is that we have been concerned about the Sport Fish Restoration and Boating Trust Fund. This is something that actually will be in the Commerce Committee. There were some concern as to what the jurisdiction was. But I look forward to us working with the Commerce Committee to make sure this is done. This fund has been part of the highway reauthorization since 1984. It is the single largest fund for fisheries conservation and boating safety.

So again, thank you all very, very much for your hard work. It is greatly appreciated.

[The prepared statement of Senator Boozman follows:]

Senator Barrasso. Thank you very much, Senator Boozman.

We have reached agreement on five amendments that we will consider by voice vote en bloc. Authors of those amendments will have the opportunity to discuss their amendments after we conclude our voting.

I would now like to recognize members who filed amendments that they agreed not to offer at this time, but we want to hear from as many as possible before we vote, and then return to others after we vote. So again, I want to thank all of you for agreeing to discuss your amendments before and after voting. Would any of the members like to be heard on any of the amendments you filed? Senator Ernst.

STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE JONI ERNST, A UNITED STATES SENATOR  
FROM THE STATE OF IOWA

Senator Ernest. Thank you, Mr. Chair. Before I speak about the amendment I filed, I would like to thank you and Senator Carper as well for your leadership on this bill, and of course, the rest of my colleagues that have provided valuable input. This is a really great bill. So thank you very much for doing this.

My amendment, Ernst No. 1, strikes from the substitute amendment Section 1401, which authorizes \$1 billion in grants for charging and fueling infrastructure for electric, hydrogen and natural gas vehicles. Bottom line, folks, I want to make clear that I do support an all of the above energy approach. I don't have any issue with these fuels or technologies.

But what I do have an issue with is the fact that this section neglects to include biofuels. Namely, the blends of E15 and E85 and other advanced biofuel fueling technologies. I encouraged my colleagues on the committee to include biofuels in the program, but there wasn't enough support to get this provision in the bill we are considering today. If all emissions reducing fuels aren't going to be treated equally by this program, then my preference is to do away with the program entirely.

Under current law, folks can claim a federal tax credit of

up to \$7,500 when they purchase an electric car. More than 80 percent of these tax credits are utilized by individuals with an adjusted gross income of \$100,000 or more. Now we are going to have the Federal Government subsidize charging infrastructure for electric vehicles, which are owned in large part by high earners in coastal States, while at the same time leaving our corn and soybean farmers and biofuel producers on the sidelines.

I am not pushing for a vote on my amendment today, but I do plan to work with my colleagues to iron this out before the bill hits the Floor. I think this program can be more effective if a broader range of fuels are eligible for this program.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

[The prepared statement of Senator Ernst follows:]

Senator Barrasso. Thank you very much, Senator Ernst.

Would any other Senators like to be recognized? Senator  
Rounds.

STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE MIKE ROUNDS, A UNITED STATES SENATOR  
FROM THE STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA

Senator Rounds. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Rounds 2 is my amendment to Section 1401 of this legislation. This section creates the competitive grant program for strategic development of vehicle charging and refueling infrastructure along alternative fuel corridors. The goal of this grant program is to allow drivers of electric, hydrogen, and natural gas vehicles to travel along these corridors.

My amendment keeps this program in place, while allowing additional alternative fuel vehicles to take part in these corridors by opening up the grant program to biofuel and propane powered vehicles. I think Senator Ernst and I are kind of on the same wavelength in this particular issue.

Section 1401 authorizes a total of \$1 billion over five years for this grant program. If we are going to invest in alternative fueling infrastructure, we should take an all of the above approach by opening this grant program up to popular alternative fuels that will help reduce our dependence on foreign oil. The United States Energy Information Administration's 2019 Energy Outlook said, "Alternative and electric vehicles gained market share in the referenced case, but gasoline vehicles remain the dominant vehicle type through the year 2050, with the combined share of sales attributable to

gasoline and flex fuel vehicles at 75 percent in 2050.”

Biofuels are already lowering carbon emissions in gasoline powered vehicles. An example, first generation ethanol reduces greenhouse gas emissions by between 34 and 39 percent. If we want to transition to a lower carbon transportation system, we cannot afford to leave any greenhouse emission reductions on the table.

While I filed this amendment to include biofuels and propane infrastructure into this grant program, I understand that some members of this committee have raised concerns about their inclusion at this time. For this reason, I will not be asking for a vote on my amendment at this time. But I hope to work with my colleagues to improve this grant program and to include additional alternative fuels in the future.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[The prepared statement of Senator Rounds follows:]

Senator Barrasso. Thank you, Senator. Senator Duckworth.

STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE TAMMY DUCKWORTH, A UNITED STATES  
SENATOR FROM THE STATE OF ILLINOIS

Senator Duckworth. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to thank you, both you and your staff, for working with me to include my autonomous vehicle impact study amendment. I look forward to continuing a dialogue on this and other issues as we head to the Floor.

My amendment simply requires relevant federal agencies to study the policy implications of autonomous vehicles on our transportation infrastructure. I think we all agree that AVs will transform our transportation system in the years to come, and it really makes sense to have the Department of Transportation begin contemplating smart implementation strategies.

In its present form, my amendment requires the Federal Highway Administration to coordinate a study to better understand impacts of AV technologies on our existing and future transportation systems, and assess the steps that should be taken to ensure that we alleviate congestion, improve safety, mobility, and protect the environment. Federal agencies should engage in this analysis now to anticipate and to avoid future problems before autonomous vehicles operate throughout our Nation.

We need to answer simple questions like, what does the

proliferation of AVs mean for the number of vehicles on our roadways and congestion in our cities and suburbs, what changes to public infrastructure may be needed once these vehicles are mass deployed, what actions should federal agencies take to avoid and mitigate negative impacts. This common-sense effort can also inform our transportation planning and should account for self-driving vehicles. Addressing these questions sooner rather than later ensures that better and smarter deployment of AVs and a better plan to mitigate future stresses on our transportation system.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, I would like to raise one issue that this bill does not address and should be included as we head it to the Floor. As you know, many people remain unaware that low-income communities and communities of color bear the brunt of the environmental burdens associated with our transportation networks. The Department of Transportation and State departments of transportation must work for everyone. And the Federal Highway Administration and other federal agencies should employ an environmental justice strategy across all programs, policies and activities.

I look forward to discussing further environmental justice issues with you as this bill advances in the Senate. Again, I thank you for working with me on my amendment to address the impacts of AVs on our transportation infrastructure. I really

appreciate your dedication to finding workable solutions on this and other important issues.

[The prepared statement of Senator Duckworth follows:]

Senator Barrasso. Thank you so very much, Senator Duckworth.

Senator Carper.

Senator Carper. Thanks, Mr. Chairman. I want to reply to Senator Duckworth's leadership in including this amendment to study autonomous vehicles as part of our highway reauthorization. Like Senator Duckworth, and others on this committee, too, I believe that EPW should play a leading role in ensuring the safety and environmental benefits of autonomous vehicles when they are deployed on our Nation's roadways, as they will be. I hope to be able to continue to work with you, Senator Duckworth, and our chairman and everyone on this committee who shares concern and interest in this issue. Thank you.

Senator Barrasso. Thank you very much, Senator Carper.

Senator Braun, you wanted to make a comment. We do have a quorum, so we will then be moving to the vote.

STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE MIKE BRAUN, A UNITED STATES SENATOR  
FROM THE STATE OF INDIANA

Senator Braun. Yes, I will make it brief. I was involved in infrastructure at the State House in Indiana. We passed a long-term road funding bill in 2017. Also involved our cities and counties to be part of the process, and was glad to see that, we called it community crossings back there. The Crossroads of America Act tries to do the same thing, get States to be involved, have skin in the game, thank you for weaving that into the bill.

Senator Baldwin and I have also an idea that incorporates resiliency into transportation projects to where you actually learn from your mistakes and you don't make them again. I have three amendments, one Buy American. In the midst of the President's trade actions to bring China toward a more market-based system, Congress must not undermine President Trump by weakening the very protections that ensure the steel in our roads is not made in China.

Without a strong Buy America provision, the increased funding in this bill would merely incentivize China to continue its non-economic steel practices. This is similar to Senators Portman and Brown; Senator Baldwin is also supporting the idea.

My amendment tightens the requirements in three ways. It codifies the executive order from President Trump; it eliminates

the use of blanket waivers, which agencies like Federal Highways have long used to avoid Congress's intent; and third, it instructs the Secretary of Transportation to review federally funded infrastructure programs and look for areas where Buy American can be strengthened.

Each of these provisions lessens the ability of the Chinese government to access the American procurement market. For many workers, it can mean the difference between going to work on Monday morning and facing a furlough because of a closure or not adhering to the guidelines.

Two other ideas; Indiana was disappointed to see that the State was not included in the DOT's most recent round of INFRA grants. The State put together a proposal that paid for 81 percent of the project. When States are willing to step forward to do that, it is hard to imagine why you wouldn't take it up on it.

So I have two amendments that seek to reward States that are willing to put skin in the game, not deny them a grant simply because they have been doing something that makes them self-sufficient in their home State.

To me, with the balance sheet that we have as a Federal Government, we should be welcoming enterprising States that are willing to pay for a greater share of infrastructure. We won't get it done here if we keep running our fiscal house like we

currently are.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Senator Braun follows:]

Senator Barrasso. Thank you very much, Senator Braun.

Well, we do have a quorum, so I would like to move to a vote on the items on today's agenda. The Ranking Member and I have agreed to vote on S. 1992, a Bill to Repeal a \$7.6 billion rescission in the Federal Aid Highway Program Contract Authority, and six General Services Administration Resolutions en bloc, by voice vote.

Members may choose to have their votes recorded for a specific item in that block after the voice vote.

Now I would like to first call up the Barrasso-Carper-Capito-Cardin Substitute Amendment to S. 2302, America's Transportation Infrastructure Act, that was circulated last Friday. The Ranking Member and I have agreed that this substitute shall be considered the original text for purposes of amendments.

Members have filed amendments to the substitute. The Ranking Member and I have agreed to vote on five amendments en bloc by voice vote, but members may choose to have their votes recorded for a specific item in that block, after the voice vote.

We have agreed to consider Carper No. 1, Inhofe-Boozman No. 1, as filed. We have also agreed to consider Revised Duckworth No. 2, Revised Merkley No. 2, and Revised Van Hollen No. 3. We have agreed to revise the filed versions of these amendments to

reflect necessary modification. I am pleased to accept these revised amendments.

So I would like to first call up Carper No. 1, Inhofe-Boozman No. 1, Revised Duckworth No. 2, Revised Merkley No. 3, and Revised Van Hollen No. 3 en bloc. I would ask that members withhold discussion of their agreed-upon amendments until after we complete voting.

Move to approve Carper 1, Inhofe-Boozman 1, Revised Duckworth 2, Revised Merkley 3, Revised Van Hollen 3 en bloc. Is there a second?

Senator Carper. Second.

Senator Barrasso. All those in favor, say aye.

[Chorus of ayes.]

Senator Barrasso. Opposed, say no.

[No audible response.]

Senator Barrasso. In the opinion of the chair, the ayes have it, and Carper 1, Inhofe-Boozman 1, Revised Duckworth 2, Revised Merkley 3, and Revised Van Hollen 3 are agreed to.

Does any Senator seek recognition to offer an amendment? Seeing none, I move to approve the substitute amendment to S. 2302 as amended and report 2302 as amended favorably to the Senate. We will hold a roll call vote. Is there a second?

Senator Carper. Second.

Senator Barrasso. The Clerk will call the roll.

The Clerk. Mr. Booker?

Senator Carper. Yes by proxy.

The Clerk. Mr. Boozman?

Senator Boozman. Aye.

The Clerk. Mr. Braun?

Senator Braun. Aye.

The Clerk. Mrs. Capito?

Senator Capito. Aye.

The Clerk. Mr. Cardin?

Senator Cardin. Aye.

The Clerk. Senator Carper?

Senator Carper. Aye.

The Clerk. Senator Cramer?

Senator Cramer. Aye.

The Clerk. Ms. Duckworth?

Senator Duckworth. Aye.

The Clerk. Ms. Ernst?

Senator Ernst. Aye.

The Clerk. Mrs. Gillibrand?

Senator Carper. Yes by proxy.

The Clerk. Mr. Inhofe?

Senator Inhofe. Aye.

The Clerk. Mr. Markey?

Senator Carper. Aye by proxy.

The Clerk. Mr. Merkley?

Senator Merkley. Aye.

The Clerk. Mr. Rounds?

Senator Rounds. Aye.

The Clerk. Mr. Sanders?

Senator Carper. Yes by proxy.

The Clerk. Mr. Shelby?

Senator Shelby. Aye.

The Clerk. Mr. Sullivan?

Senator Barrasso. Aye by proxy.

The Clerk. Mr. Van Hollen?

Senator Van Hollen. Aye.

The Clerk. Mr. Whitehouse?

Senator Carper. Yes by proxy.

The Clerk. Mr. Wicker?

Senator Wicker. Aye.

The Clerk. Mr. Chairman?

Senator Barrasso. Aye.

The Clerk. Mr. Chairman, the ayes are 21, the nays are zero.

Senator Barrasso. We have approved S. 2302, as amended, by a vote of 21 to zero. This will now be reported favorably to the Senate. I ask unanimous consent to enter into the record 87 letters and statements of support.

Without objection, so ordered.

[The referenced information follows:]

Senator Barrasso. I would now like to call up S. 1992, a Bill to Amend the FAST Act to Repeal a Rescission of Funds, and six General Services Administration resolutions en bloc. I move to approve and report S. 1992 and approve six GSA resolutions en bloc. Is there a second?

Senator Carper. Second.

Senator Barrasso. All those in favor, please say aye.

[Chorus of ayes.]

Senator Barrasso. Opposed, no.

[No audible response.]

Senator Barrasso. In the opinion of the chair, the ayes have it. We have approved S. 1992, which will be reported favorably to the Senate. We will also approve six GSA resolutions.

The voting part of the business meeting is finished, and I am very grateful that all of the members were able to be here and the proxies from a number of those who were not able to be here as well today. I agree and join with you and Senator Capito and Senator Cardin in thanking this remarkable staff behind us who has done a wonderful job to bring us all together in a bipartisan way to support legislation that is really going to make a significant difference for the people of this Country. Thank you.

Since the voting part of the meeting is concluded, a number

of members who have filed amendments are here that they did not offer, others are here that may want to discuss amendments that have been taken up and adopted. Any members who would like to make a comment at this time? Senator Van Hollen.

STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE CHRIS VAN HOLLEN, A UNITED STATES  
SENATOR FROM THE STATE OF MARYLAND

Senator Van Hollen. Mr. Chairman, I just want to join our colleagues in thanking you and the ranking member, Senator Capito and Senator Cardin, for your good work on this. I think this is a major step forward. It will also mean considerable additional resources to invest in transportation priorities around the Country. I think Maryland will receive about \$130 million more, if we, of course, take the next step to get all of this funded.

I just wanted to mention one program I am pleased that we included in the base bill. Senator Cardin and I and others have been pushing for it, it is called Community Connectivity, a pilot program. This is a program to deal with past infrastructure projects that are unnecessary or have become an impediment to development. In West Baltimore, we have something called the bridge to nowhere, which is a bridge that was started many years ago, and literally, drops off.

[Laughter.]

Senator Van Hollen. So it has made it really difficult to develop that part of the city in a way that would benefit the residents. So I am pleased that this legislation now authorizes and provides funding for both studies and deconstruction in that particular area.

I also just want to salute everybody for including the climate change resiliency and sustainability provisions. I think those are critical parts of the legislation.

Finally, on the GSA leases, I want to second the comments my senior Senator from Maryland made regarding the FBI. I would also note that we are voting to extend the GSA lease for the National Institute of Food and Agriculture by 20 years. Some members of the committee may have been following the fact that the USDA has proposed to move the NIFA to another State, which has created a lot of disruptions, many important and well-respected scientists in the area of agriculture are going to be leaving their jobs and their service to the Country.

But I hope that those who choose to stay will be allowed to telecommute at least until there is a new building, a new permanent building where they can work, in what I think is going to be Kansas City. It makes no sense to tell employees that not only do they have to move a thousand miles but they have to move when there is no permanent location for a future NIFA.

So I am glad that NIFA's lease is continued for another 20 years. I would like to see them stay there another 20 years, and Senator Cardin and I and others are fighting to make sure that we keep them there where their expertise is required. But if they are required to move, I hope this committee will work to make sure that that is done in a way that addresses the needs

and concerns of the employees.

Senator Barrasso. Thank you, Senator Van Hollen.

Senator Cardin.

Senator Cardin. Mr. Chairman, if I just might, I concur with Senator Van Hollen's point in regard to the leases. Certainly with regard to the employees. It is very disruptive to move, unless there is a good reason, and there really is not a good reason.

In regard to these highways, I was just whispering to Senator Carper when we were talking about this road, this road was actually authorized and build in the 1970s, if my memory is correct. So none of us were in the Senate or Congress at the time this was originally constructed. It divides neighborhoods, and as I mentioned in my opening comments, I am glad that we have the ability to evaluate, identify and hopefully remove these highways that are serving no purposes other than to divide communities.

Senator Barrasso. Senator Braun.

Senator Braun. Thank you, Mr. Chair. I would be remiss if I didn't mention that infrastructure, in my opinion, should be one of the things the Federal Government does, and does it in a way where we are doing it from a position of strength. I know as a main street entrepreneur and building my own business over 37 years, when you do live within your means and you have a

solid balance sheet, it is amazing the opportunities that can come your way.

Being one of the maybe few finance guys that is actually here in the Senate, I wish we would take note that regardless of which side of the aisle you are on, and for all the folks I see come to the Federal Government, wanting help for things that we have traditionally helped with, infrastructure should be at the top. Everyone benefits from it.

But if you are managing your finances in a way that this place has, where I will never forget Senator Van Hollen's walking out of the door, said in the Budget Committee, political will. We need to get it, because I can tell you that the reconciliation, the way things will get fixed in the long run will not be pretty. It is going to be a version of 2008, but it is going to impact the Federal Government.

So I think we all need to be, regardless of what you want to do through the Federal Government, aware that running nearly trillion-dollar deficits on \$22 trillion in debt, it is not going to be good down the road. We have just not paid any consequences for it. Sadly, infrastructure will be the thing that is so capital intensive, it is somewhere between a \$2 trillion and \$3 trillion enterprise over 10 to 20 years. It is just hard to see how you are going to do much about it when you are generating trillion-dollar deficits.

So I think it is all, it is incumbent upon us to figure out how we get out of the groove that we are currently in, and for the time that I am going to spend here in the Senate, I am going to take every opportunity to mention it. Thank you.

Senator Barrasso. Thank you very much, Senator Braun.

I want to thank all members of the committee. I do ask unanimous consent that the staff have authority to make technical and conforming changes to each of the matters approved today. Oh, I am sorry, Senator Whitehouse, thank you.

STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE SHELDON WHITEHOUSE, A UNITED STATES  
SENATOR FROM THE STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

Senator Whitehouse. I just want to congratulate you, Chairman, and the ranking member, on the way in which this piece of legislation came together. There is a lot in here, I think, for all of us to be proud of. I am particularly proud of the Bridge Investment Act. Rhode Island has a lot of old bridges and badly worn bridges. Funding there will be put to very, very good use.

We have a lot of coastal infrastructure that is at risk. There are entire communities where, if the road goes out, you can no longer get emergency vehicles in to help rescue people. Port electrification is going to be really important to us with our Port of Providence and Quonset Port. Of course, the carbon reduction incentives program, I don't need to dwell on, but you all know where I am on that issue.

I want to congratulate the ranking member for how hard he worked on charging infrastructure for electric vehicles. That is going to be terrifically important. I think we probably get around a little bit more by bicycle in Rhode Island than you do in Wyoming, Mr. Chairman, because distances are a little closer. We are really pleased with the Bicycle and Transportation Alternatives Program, which will make a big difference.

The INFRA program is one that I designed in this committee

years ago. We just got a very big grant for a very big highway project in our capital city from that, and it is great to see that continue forward. I think you can do good, big things with all of that.

I want to congratulate Representative Cicilline for his support and leadership on the House side of the Scenic Byways provision. We have nine in Rhode Island, and I appreciate that being included. USE IT is a bill of ours, Mr. Chairman, and I am very grateful to you for continuing to support our direct air capture efforts.

For those of you who weren't with us, we went to Aberdeen, where the university is extracting carbon dioxide out of the air and creating little cubes of calcium carbonate from direct air capture. In fact, in Wyoming this summer, the XPrize is going to be considering that project, along with several others. So carbon capture is really coming along.

And last, the diesel emissions bill is very important, particularly in urban areas where buses idle. So there are a lot of really good, bipartisan wins in here, and I want to thank you both very much, thank all the members very much. I also ask unanimous consent that I be deemed to have voted in person. I was a bit late coming to the vote, but I would appreciate that.

[The prepared statement of Senator Whitehouse follows:]

Senator Barrasso. Without objection, so ordered.

Senator Carper. Senator Whitehouse is a champion on a lot of the issues he has just mentioned. We value his leadership and appreciate his joining us today.

Senator Whitehouse. We hope to wrap up Innovative Materials by the Floor. So thank you very much for your support with that.

Senator Carper. Mr. Chairman, as you and I know, I don't read all the President's tweets, but I couldn't help but read one today. It said the Senator is working hard on America's Transportation Infrastructure Act. It goes on to say it will have a big impact, all caps, big impact, on our highways and roads all across our Nation. And just drawing from Republicans and Democrats, do I hear the beautiful word bipartisan? Yes, you do. Get it done, I am with you.

Let me just say, those are his words. We welcome the President's words today, and that is supportive of our five-year bipartisan surface transportation bill. We welcome even more his vocal support of responsible funding to fully pay for it in the years to come. The 800-pound gorilla in the room is always, how do we pay for this important stuff. We will need his vocal, active support. Thank you.

Senator Barrasso. Thank you, thank you all for being with us today for this historic markup. Thank you to all the members

of the committee and for the remarkable staff who has done such a great job.

I do ask unanimous consent that the staff have the authority to make technical and conforming changes to each of the matters approved today. Without objection, that will be done.

And with that, our business meeting is concluded and adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 10:04 a.m., the committee was adjourned.]