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U.S. Senate

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Committee on Environment
and Public Works

Washington, D.C.

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BUSINESS MEETING

Wednesday, May 22, 2024

United States Senate

Committee on Environment and Public Works

Washington, D.C.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:47 a.m. in room 406, Dirksen Senate Office Building, the Honorable Thomas R. Carper [chairman of the committee] presiding.

Present: Senators Carper, Capito, Cardin, Whitehouse, Merkley, Markey, Stabenow, Kelly, Padilla, Fetterman, Cramer, Ricketts, Boozman, Wicker, Sullivan.

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

Senator Carper. I am pleased to call this business meeting to order.

Today, as you know, we will be considering the Water Resources Development Act of 2024, along with three bills related to the management of public buildings, a bill to name a Federal courthouse in Kentucky, and reauthorization of the National Dam Safety Program at the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

Before we do that, I am going to take a moment to just briefly discuss each of these items.

First, we will consider the Water Resources Development Act of 2024. As my colleagues know, it is one of the major pieces of legislation that this committee deals with, in fact, that the Senate and the House deal with. I am excited. This is an exciting day for us. By unanimous consent, I request that we replace the committee-drafted Water Resources Development Act on the agenda with S. 4367, which is the identical introduced text of WRDA, without objection. Hearing no objection.

[The text of S. 4367 follows:]

Senator Carper. The Army Corps' work protects us from floods, helps shippers navigate our water safely, and provides critical infrastructure to communities across this Country of ours. As sea levels rise, driven by climate change, and extreme weather events increasingly threatens our communities and their economies, the Corps' work will take on an even greater importance.

We must continue to equip the agency with the tools that it needs to invest in our Nation's water infrastructure and to make our communities more resilient. The Water Resources Development Act of 2024 is a critical step, big step, in the right direction.

The committee received more than 1,200 WRDA requests. I will say that again: the committee received more than 1,200 WRDA requests this cycle, impacting programs in all 50 States. This bill is the product of an extensive bipartisan process to find agreement on as many of these requests as possible. While we were not able to find agreement, we are committed to keeping the conversation going in future WRDA bills.

I just want to take moment to thank the staff on both sides of the aisle for, really, an incredible bipartisan effort that went into the drafting of this particular legislation. I particularly want to thank, on Senator Capito's team, Murphie, Libby, Dan, Dom, and Adam. I hope I am not forgetting anybody,

but if I am, forgive me, but Murphie, great job, and big thanks to you and your team. I also want to recognize the leadership of John Kane on the majority side, along with Linnea, Nicole, Jordan, and Courtney, our staff director.

Next, we are going to consider three bills that seek to improve the Federal real estate disposal process. The second of these three bills is the FASTA Reform Act, a bipartisan legislation sponsored by Senators Kelly and Cramer. In 2016, Congress passed the Federal Asset Sale and Transfer Act, also known as FASTA, which recognized the need to improve the public buildings disposal process.

That law created an independent board called the Public Buildings Reform Board, whose job is to identify opportunities for the Federal Government to reduce its inventory of civilian real estate property. The FASTA Reform Act authorizes the Public Buildings Reform Board through 2026. It also improves the FASTA process based on lessons learned over the Board's first five years of operation.

The second of these three bills is sponsored by Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton of the District of Columbia. This legislation, which the House of Representatives passed by a voice vote, I think, late last year, directs the General Services Administration to dispose of a historic school buildings in our Nation's capital, in Washington, D.C.

The Daniel Webster School is located in downtown Washington and has been vacant since the 1980s. This legislation directs GSA to either sell the building or use it for public benefit by 2026. Making better use of this building will be a win-win for the District of Columbia economy and for the surrounding community.

The third bill is the GSA Disposal Procell Tribal Parity Act, legislation that Senator Alex Padilla of California and James Lankford of Oklahoma introduced earlier this year. This bill gives Tribes the same opportunity that State and local governments have to access surplus Federal property during the Federal disposal process. Senator Mark Kelly of Arizona and Senator Cramer of North Dakota and John Hoeven, our colleague John Hoeven of North Dakota, have cosponsored this piece of legislation.

Next, we are going to consider a bill from our minority leader, Senator Mitch McConnell, to name a United States courthouse annex in London, Kentucky after Eugene Siler, Jr. Judge Siler is a senior judge of the U.S. Court of Appeals with the Sixth Circuit. He has served on the Federal bench for nearly half a century. Prior to his service on the bench, he was U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of Kentucky.

Judge Siler also served as U.S. Navy midshipman in 1957, and as a lieutenant in the U.S. Naval Reserve from 1958 to 1983.

This retired Navy captain salutes him, along with many of you. This legislation honors Judge Siler's distinguished career in public service.

Finally, we will consider a bill to reauthorize the National Dam Safety Program. This program is operated by the Federal Emergency Management Agency. Through this program, States, Federal agencies, and other stakeholders work together to promote the establishment and maintenance of effective Federal and State dam safety programs to reduce risk to human life, property, and the environment from dam-related hazards. This bill would reauthorize the program through 2029.

I want to thank our members and their staffs for their hard work and partnership in advancing these important bills. We look forward to reporting each of these bills to the Senate Floor with strong bipartisan support. I would be remiss if I didn't say, again, a huge thank you to our Ranking Member, Senator Capito, and her team for the wonderful collaboration and for your leadership that has brought us to this day.

Senator Capito, you are recognized.

[The prepared statement of Senator Carper follows:]

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

Senator Capito. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Today is an exciting day. Once again, we have worked together on a bipartisan basis to develop the biennial Water Resources Development Act, or WRDA, legislation that we are considering today.

I want to thank you and both of our staffs for putting together a tailored bill that authorizes critical water resource studies and projects for the Civil Works Program of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. From navigation improvements to flood risk management to ecosystem restoration, the work of the Corps protects the lives and livelihoods of millions of Americans and facilitates commerce throughout this Country and internationally.

Since 2014, Congress has passed WRDA legislation every two years, so today, we are taking the important step to keeping that ten-year streak alive through our bipartisan agreement to address our Nation's water resources needs. I also want to recognize the leadership of the EPW Subcommittee on Transportation and Infrastructure Chairman Mark Kelly and Ranking Member Kevin Cramer for you and your staff's dedication to this legislation.

WRDA 2024 reauthorizes many new feasibility studies and

projects, as well as modifications of existing projects. The bill avoids that one-size-fits-all solutions while maintaining important flexibility for the Corps in developing projects in consultation with non-federal partners.

It contains directives for the Corps to develop comprehensive implementation plans for this WRDA and prior WRDAs. This will enable the Corps to focus its energy and resources on fully implementing this WRDA and prior WRDA provisions in order to better reflect the intent of Congress and ensure the agency continues to be responsive to water resources needs.

With that table setting about how WRDA is important to all of us, I would like to take a moment to highlight some of the ways this bill will directly address the needs of my home State of West Virginia. Almost eight years ago, in June of 2016, West Virginia experienced flooding at historic levels, leading to tragic deaths and devastation. Today's bill provides support for future projects identified by the Corps Feasibility Study for Flood Risk Management and the Kanawha River Basin.

This legislation also increases the ability of the Corps to carry out smaller projects, such as emergency stream bank and shoreline protections, ecosystem restoration, and debris and obstruction removal, which are critical to many areas in our State. WRDA 2024 directs the Corps to expedite feasibility

studies for the Upper Guyandotte and Kanawha River Basin, as well as to expedite projects in Milton and at the Bluestone Dam in Hinton.

This bill supports drinking and wastewater projects across West Virginia and authorizes the Corps to restore rivers and streams impacted by acid mine drainage in West Virginia and in our neighboring States of Ohio and Pennsylvania. Increased partnership with West Virginia University and improved education and outreach to communities in modernization of how the Corps assess communities' ability to pay will improve the Corps' activities and outcomes in my State.

I think every member on this committee could probably go through the litany of where we have worked with you, all the numerous projects that the Chairman said were submitted to us, and I know you have a lot of good successes in this bill for your homes States, as well. I urge my colleagues to support WRDA 2024, and I look forward to get our WRDA legislation into law.

As the Chairman mentioned, we are authorizing five other bills. I am pleased to report that the FEMA, the National Dam Safety Bill, and the FASTA Bill, and also the naming of the courthouse by Leader McConnell to name after Sixth Circuit Senior Judge Eugene Siler, Jr.

With that, I thank you for your teamwork, and on all six

bills we are considering today, I am proud that we are going to be reporting them out under your leadership.

[The prepared statement of Senator Capito follows:]

Senator Carper. Thank you so much.

Did you say Hinton, West Virginia?

Senator Capito. Hinton, West Virginia.

Senator Carper. You said Bluestone Dam?

Senator Capito. Yes.

Senator Carper. Where my sister and I learned to fish, and with our dad, a million years ago, great memories.

Senator Capito. Yes, we used to, when we wanted something, our parents would look at us and say, Hinton is up the river.

Senator Carper. I won't mention what my parents would say.

Well, I see that a voting quorum is present. As we proceed, I would ask Senators to hold their statements on the bill until after the voting is complete.

First, I want to call up S. 4367, The Water Resources Development Act of 2024. An amendment in the nature of a substitute to this legislation is Carper-Capito Number One. The amendment makes several changes agreed to on a bipartisan basis.

As the Ranking Member and I have agreed, I ask unanimous consent to use this amendment in the nature of a substitute as the base text for the purpose of this business meeting.

Hearing no objection, the committee will now use the Carper-Capito Amendment in the nature of a substitute as the base text for the purpose of this committee's action.

[The text of the Carper-Capito Amendment Number One follows:]

Senator Carper. Does any Senator wish to offer another amendment to this legislation? Senator Capito?

Senator Capito. I have an amendment at the desk.

Senator Carper. Please.

Senator Capito. Thank you.

I would like to call up my amendment, Capito Number One. My amendment would change the title of this bill to the Thomas R. Carper Water Resources Development Act of 2024.

As we all know, Chairman Carper will be retiring from the Senate at the end of this session. Over the past three and a half years that he has served as Chairman, this committee has worked in a bipartisan way to exact a number of major pieces of legislation, including the Surface Transportation Reauthorization Act, the Drinking Water and Wastewater Infrastructure Act, and the Water Resources Development Act of 2022.

Before Chairman Carper leaves, I am confident we will add to this list the WRDA Bill, the ADVANCE Act, hopefully, and a legislation reauthorizing some conservation economic development programs. We will all have occasions to discuss the committee's achievements and to add to them, but this WRDA Bill, being perhaps the last major infrastructure bill that we will mark up during this committee, I think it is fitting that it bear our Chairman's name.

I hope all my colleagues will join me in supporting this amendment and in thanking Chairman Carper for his service and leadership on the committee.

[The text of the Capito Amendment Number One follows:]

Senator Carper. That is very, very kind. Thank you very much. I accept this honor on behalf of all the folks sitting behind me and the members, Democrat and Republican, who helped make these successes possible. It has been just such a joy working with you. Thank you so much.

I said several times, in the last several weeks, people have been so nice to me. If I had known people were going to be this nice to me, I would have quit a lot sooner.

[Laughter.]

Senator Carper. You think I am kidding.

Are we ready?

Senator Sullivan. Mr. Chairman?

Senator Carper. Yes, please.

Senator Sullivan. Mr. Chairman, I would like to call up Amendment Sullivan Number Two.

Senator Carper. Could you hold just for one moment, Dan? We have to vote on Senator Capito's Amendment Number One.

Senator Stabenow. Mr. Chairman, I would ask unanimous consent that there be a unanimous vote for Senator Capito's amendment.

Senator Carper. Is there objection? In that case, the ayes have it. Thank you.

Does any other Senator wish to offer an amendment? Senator Sullivan?

Senator Sullivan. Mr. Chairman, I would like to call up Sullivan Amendment Number Two.

I want to begin by thanking you and the Ranking Member on the excellent leadership on this bill. A lot of us know that this committee, despite having Senators from kind of far ends of the political spectrum, we all work together really well and pass a lot of really important legislation. I think this is going to be another important milestone that way.

This WRDA bill is very important to my State. I would like to say, Alaska, we are resource-rich, infrastructure-poor. We have less road miles than Connecticut, and yet, we are almost 120 times bigger than Connecticut. These pieces of legislation are really important.

Mr. Chairman, my Amendment Number Two goes through the issue of contaminated lands, Alaska Native lands, American Indian lands. I have been working closely with Senator Kelly on this.

We had a really big land settlement in Alaska over 50 years ago called the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act. Over 44 million acres of Federal and State land went to Alaska Native corporations, probably the largest Native Indigenous land settlement in the history of the world, and yet, as you know, Mr. Chairman, a lot of that land was actually polluted.

So, the Federal Government gave Alaska Native corporations

very polluted land. You and I worked together a couple years ago, Mr. Chairman, I really appreciate thank. Believe it or not, under CERCLA the EPA was going to sue to Alaska Native corporations to clean up the land that the Federal Government had polluted. Pretty crazy.

We fixed that liability issue, but the estimates of the cleanup just in Alaska are well over \$10 billion. We need innovative solutions on how to clean up those lands, and that is why Senator Kelly and I introduced the Contaminated Lands Reclamation Act of 2024. This would provide applicants, whether Alaska Native corporations or Indian Tribes in Arizona, an opportunity for innovative solutions on land cleanup.

However, Mr. Chairman, knowing that this bill is of limited scope and the GAO is still reviewing the nature and extent of the cleanup on Indian lower 48 lands and Alaska Native lands, I am going to withdraw my amendment, but I wanted to just speak to it with Senator Kelly here, because we have made a lot of good progress on this.

This committee has made a lot of good progress on this. We are hoping this is not a controversial bill at all, but an innovative bill. Maybe you don't need Federal dollars, but other ways to clean up these contaminated lands to our Nation's first peoples.

But we are going to be respectful, because we know the

limited scope of this bill, and given that the Chair and the Ranking Member ask that we withdraw it, we will withdraw it. But it is a really important bill for, I think, all of us. I just wanted to speak to it.

With that, I withdraw Sullivan Number Two.

Senator Carper. Thank you so much.

Senator Kelly. Mr. Chairman?

Senator Carper. Senator Kelly?

Senator Kelly. Mr. Chairman, I want to echo Senator Sullivan's frustration that we were unable to get this language from our bipartisan bill included in the base text of the WRDA bill.

I understand that we are waiting for some GAO studies back from the prior WRDA bill related to this specific topic, and I agree that it is important that we get this policy right, so we get that, but tribal communities in Arizona, in Alaska, throughout the Country, have struggled with contaminated land for decades. I hope that, as this bill goes to the Floor, we can continue to work on this issue, because it is important to get this done.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator Carper. You bet. Senator Capito, anything you want to add at this point?

Senator Capito. I am just committed to working with the

two of you to see that we can work to a better conclusion, a more welcome conclusion for you all, but I appreciate the fact that this does have limited scope and this amendment was beyond the scope of the original bills. I appreciate that, thank you.

Senator Carper. Does any other Senator wish to offer an amendment to our legislation? Any other amendments?

There are no further amendments. I move to approve and report this bill favorably. Is there a second?

Senato Capito. I second.

Senator Carper. It has been moved and seconded. The Clerk will call the roll.

The Clerk. Mr. Boozman?

Senator Boozman. Yes, aye.

The Clerk. Ms. Capito?

Senator Capito. Aye.

The Clerk. Mr. Cardin?

Senator Cardin. Aye.

The Clerk. Mr. Cramer?

Senator Cramer. Aye.

The Clerk. Mr. Fetterman?

Senator Fetterman. Aye.

The Clerk. Mr. Graham?

Senator Capito. Aye, by proxy.

The Clerk. Mr. Kelly?

Senator Kelly. Aye.

The Clerk. Ms. Lummis?

Senator Capito. Aye, by proxy.

The Clerk. Mr. Markey?

Senator Markey. Aye.

The Clerk. Mr. Merkley?

Senator Merkley. Aye.

The Clerk. Mr. Mullin?

Senator Capito. Aye, by proxy.

The Clerk. Mr. Padilla?

Senator Padilla. Aye.

The Clerk. Mr. Ricketts?

Senator Ricketts. Aye.

The Clerk. Mr. Sanders?

Senator Carper. Aye, by proxy.

The Clerk. Ms. Stabenow?

Senator Stabenow. Aye.

The Clerk. Mr. Sullivan?

Senator Sullivan. Aye.

The Clerk. Mr. Whitehouse?

Senator Carper. Aye, by proxy.

The Clerk. Mr. Wicker?

Senator Wicker. Aye.

The Clerk. Mr. Chairman?

Senator Carper. Aye.

The Clerk. Chairman, the yeas are 19, the nays are zero.

Senator Carper. Can you say that again?

The Clerk. The yeas are 19, the nays are zero.

Senator Carper. Is there objection? Anybody want to object to that? It doesn't get any better than that.

With that in mind, the bill is reported favorably.

I now call up five bills for committee consideration. The first of those, I mentioned it earlier, S. 3880, then H.R. 4688, followed by S. 3564, and S. 4293, and finally, S. 4359.

[The text of the legislation follows:]

Senator Carper. I also call up two amendments. They include the Carper-Capito Kelly-Cramer Amendment Number One to S. 3880 and amendment in the nature of a substitute, Carper Amendment Number One to H.R. 4688, also an amendment in the nature of a substitute.

[The text of the amendment and the amendments in the nature of a substitute follows:]

Senator Carper. I ask that both amendments be agreed to by unanimous consent. Is there objection? Hearing none.

Without objection, I now move that the committee vote on all five bills en bloc by voice vote. Without objection, I move to report favorably S. 3880 as amended, H.R. 4688 as amended, S. 3564, S. 4293, and S. 4359. All in favor, please say aye.

[Chorus of ayes.]

Senator Carper. All opposed, please say nay.

[No audible response.]

Senator Carper. In the opinion of the chair, the ayes have it. These five bills are favorably reported. I note for the record that a quorum of the committee is present. That concludes the committee's votes for this business meeting.

I want to thank again Senator Capito. I want to thank our staffs, both sides of the aisle. We have a couple folks, a couple of our members who want to speak after we finish this, after I finish my statement, but I just want to thank everybody. A lot of work has been done, and great work has been done.

People say to me, even today on the train, why can't you guys figure out how to work together down there? I wish they could see this committee, because that is what we do. Bipartisan solutions are lasting solutions, as we know.

With that having been said, I think I can yield to Senator Cardin, please. Thanks, everyone.

Senator Cardin. First, just to our Chairman and Senator Capito, thank you for your extraordinary leadership. Senator Cramer, Senator Kelly, thank you for your leadership on the subcommittee. This is a good day for our committee. It is a good day for our Nation. I want to thank you.

There are many provisions in the WRDA 2024 that affect my State of Maryland, and I thank you for the cooperation in including those provisions, including dealing with feasibility studies on flooding problems on Coastal Highway and Ocean City, which the Chairman is very familiar with, since he gets caught in that flooding situation every once in a while, as well as Route 50 in Prince George's County secret loop, which is extremely important to move forward. That will make the shipping channel in the Baltimore Harbor much more efficient.

We have issues that deal with the following up of our small harbors and underserved harbors that was in WRDA 2022, the rewatering issues dealing with ability to pay.

But I want to mention one specific issue that we have had conversations about that is extremely important to our State, and that deals with the Baltimore coastal storm risk management. Included in the bill we just passed is to expedite the completion of the Chief's Report in regards to that storm risk management study. We expect to have that report done by next month.

It is the practice of this committee that we do not authorize until the Chief's Report is completed. I just want to point out that we do expect to have that completed by June, assuming that that is as indicated, I would expect that we would be able to include it prior to the WRDA 2024 being acted on by the Floor. I just want to get the Chair's understanding on that.

I just point out one additional point, Mr. Chairman. This report moving forward by committee authorization on WRDA 2024 becomes even more important today, because the risk management studies include the two tunnels, which are now the only route on the north-south corridor because the Francis Scott Key Bridge will not be completed for a couple of years.

So I would just ask the Chairman's cooperation and the Ranking Member's cooperation that, assuming the Chief's Report is back, which is the practice that we would include that as an authorized project if it can be done in a timely way. You say yes.

[Laughter.]

Senator Cardin. I appreciate the Chair and Ranking Member's encouragement that that would be done.

Senator Carper. Unfortunately, they don't want me to stay here forever, but you are stuck with me for at least another six or seven months, and I will do my best, my friend.

Senator Kelly, and then after Senator Kelly, Senator Padilla would like to be recognized.

Senator Kelly. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and congratulations on negotiating your fourth WRDA Bill. I value your partnership on this, and the entire Country has benefitted from your leadership. I want to thank Ranking Member Capito and my partner on the Transportation and Infrastructure Subcommittee, Senator Cramer, for working together on this important legislation.

One year ago, I led a hearing as Chair of the Transportation and Infrastructure Subcommittee focused on how the Army Corps could respond to long-term drought in the western United States. We heard a lot of solutions in that subcommittee hearing, and thanks to a lot of hard work, this year's bipartisan Water Resources Development Act takes big steps to improve how we can prepare for long-term drought in the west.

For example, this bill creates a new pilot program to allow the Army Corps to modify how a dam or reservoir operates in a drought-stricken region. This could let reservoirs, like Roosevelt Dam in Arizona, store additional water during wet winters and to be better prepared for future years when drought conditions are worse.

It also gives the Army Corps the ability to respond to invasive plant species in drought-prone regions, such as the

invasive salt cedar tree in Arizona, which both exacerbates drought and increases wildfire risks.

It also allows the Army Corps and Bureau of Reclamation to work more closely together when updating flood control curves at Reclamation facilities, which could increase water storage further. It creates a new program to allow the Army Corps to partner with Tribal communities to construct and manage Corps projects. Many of these projects were included in my legislation, the Drought Resilience Infrastructure Act, which I was proud to introduce with Senator Padilla and many of my colleagues from the western United States.

Finally, today's bill also includes direction for the Corps to expedite the completion of more than 15 infrastructure projects in Arizona, including critical flood control projects in Winslow and Flagstaff, Arizona where I chaired a subcommittee hearing earlier this year. I know the process of negotiating this bill wasn't easy, but it was through hard work and bipartisan cooperation that allowed us to get to this point.

I look forward to working together with Chairman Carper, Senator Capito, and Senator Cramer to get our bipartisan bill with these important priorities signed into law, which will make a real difference in the State of Arizona. Thank you.

Senator Carper. Thank you for those words.

My dad used to say, he was also a Navy guy, Chief Petty

Officer in World War II, but my dad used to say, the harder we work, the luckier we get. You are right; there is a lot of hard work that has gone into this. I just want to salute everybody, including you and your team, very much.

Senator Kelly. Thank you.

Senator Carper. Senator Padilla, please. Thank you.

Senator Padilla. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I, too, wanted to highlight the committee's passage of three bills that the State of California will benefit greatly from, including the now Thomas R. Carper Water Resources Development Act. I love that, along with legislation that I introduced to reauthorize the National Dam Safety Program, as well as the GSA Tribal Parity Act.

In particular, I am proud to see the authorization of funding to support environmental infrastructure and restoration for the Tijuana River Valley watershed. Since I joined the committee, I have worked to provide additional funding to address the flow of toxic sewage and waste that crosses the border and jeopardizes not just the environment and health of local communities, but the health and safety of Homeland Security personnel and military personnel in the region. Ensuring the Army Corps' partnership in this effort is another important step towards addressing this crisis.

I was also glad to work with my friend, Senator Cramer, to

reauthorize FEMA's National Dam Safety Program, which expired at the end of September, leaving thousands of high-risk dams across the Country more vulnerable to failure and endangering the people who live in their vicinity. This program supports States with resources for training, for emergency planning, dam inspection, and monitoring.

Of California's 1,530 dams, more than 800 are classified as high hazard potential, so the threat is real. The concern is real. As climate change increases the risks of extreme flooding and threatens our Nation's water infrastructure, we can't afford to let up on dam safety, but we are making progress here today.

Finally, I want to celebrate the committee passage of the GSA Tribal Parity Act, which I introduced with Senator Lankford, to dramatically improve the ability of tribal governments to acquire surplus Federal buildings below market value if properties are being used for public purposes.

As our Nation works to strengthen tribal sovereignty and our relationship with Tribes across the Country, bills like this will ensure that we improve the Federal Government's relationship with tribal government and ensure that they have the same land acquisition opportunities as State and local governments currently enjoy.

So thank you again, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Capito, for working with me on these bipartisan wins for our States. I

look forward to working with all of my colleagues to move these bills to the President's desk as soon as possible. Thank you.

Senator Carper. Congratulations on the good work, and thank you for being, you have been a great member of this committee. Thank you so much for being a part of us. Thank you.

Any other Senators wish to speak? If not, I am going to yield to Senator Capito for any comments she would like to make, please. Senator Capito?

Senator Capito. Well, just briefly, I think that we see when we work hard and work out the differences, that we can come to a unanimous conclusion in this committee. We have done it under your leadership more than a few times, so I thank you for that.

I would also like to thank the Army Corps of Engineers, because we couldn't have such a good, I think, product without all the technical advice that they give us and our staff to be able to work out some of the details that only they know the best way to do, so I want to give a shoutout to them as well, because this obviously impacts their work. But at the same time, it wouldn't work as well without them weighing in heavily on the front end.

So, thank you very much.

Senator Carper. To that last point, I just want to say

amen. In our State, the Army Corps of Engineers plays a huge role. We are very, very grateful for what they have done in years gone by and what they are doing even today.

We have people on this committee who served in uniform before. Marines, Danny, others, and we have folks who are veterans of the Army, Air Force, Navy, and there is a fair amount of good-natured ribbing that goes on, as Senator Sullivan knows.

Sometimes, when somebody is an Army veteran who is taking shots at the Navy, my service, I will say to him or her, I will say, different uniforms, same team. We are different parties on this committee. We are divided equally, but at the end of the day, same team.

The folks that we represent in the States across this Country, I think, can feel proud of the work that we have done. I know that I am. I know that Senator Capito is.

Again, we get credit for things that come out of this committee, bills and laws that come out of this committee, but we would be nowhere without our staffs. I have mentioned the names, I think, of every key staff member who has worked very, very hard to get us to this point in time.

With that, I have a short closing statement, here. We are going to call it a day.

A little bit of housekeeping to wrap it up. I have three

unanimous consent agreements. The first, I ask unanimous consent for members to submit their statements for the record on the legislation that we have considered today, without objection.

Second, I would like to ask unanimous consent to submit for the record a number of letters of support for the legislation that our committee is approving today, without objection. I also ask unanimous consent that our staffs have authority to make technical and conforming changes to the legislation that our committee has approved today, without objection.

[The referenced information follows:]

Senator Carper. With that, my thanks to everyone, especially this lady sitting next to me. Thank you all for your participation, to our staffs, everybody that has provided input to us as we have gone through this extraordinary process. With that, the business meeting is adjourned. Thanks so much.

[Whereupon, at 10:23 a.m., the business meeting was adjourned.]