

people in our country and Members of the Senate will welcome their judgment.

But on this day, Mr. President, I call upon the Energy and Natural Resources Committee to immediately commence hearings on the important Puerto Rico self-determination bill. I join with Senator GRAHAM and Senator CRAIG in offering this legislation. I hope the people of Puerto Rico can be proud that this Senate will await their judgment and will offer them this opportunity.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

EXTENSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I request unanimous consent that, notwithstanding the previous order, the Senator from Ohio and I be permitted to proceed in morning business for 15 additional minutes.

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

Ms. COLLINS addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

(The remarks of Ms. COLLINS and Mr. DEWINE pertaining to the introduction of S. 1724 are located in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

INTERMODAL SURFACE TRANSPORTATION EFFICIENCY ACT OF 1997

The Senate continued with the consideration of the bill.

Mr. CHAFEE. Mr. President, I will send an amendment to the desk. I will not ask for its immediate consideration. This is an amendment that would require the Secretary of Transportation to reduce the amounts made available under the ISTEA of 1998 for the fiscal year 1998 by the amounts made available under the extension that we did last fall, the so-called 6-month extension bill.

Now, last year, Mr. President, as you recall, the Senate passed a 6-month extension bill which allowed the States to use their unobligated balances to fund eligible transportation projects. The bill also allocated an additional \$5.5 billion in new money to the States.

As you remember, the ISTEA I expired on September 30 so we knew we were not going to be able to enact a new ISTEA bill—indeed we have not enacted it yet—and that carried us over to May 1 of this year. In it we provided not only that States could use their unobligated balances but there was also allocated an additional \$5.5 billion.

The Senate agreed to provide this new \$5.5 billion on the condition that the amounts allocated under ISTEA II in fiscal year 1998 would be reduced by the amount each State received under the 6-month extension. In other words, yes, we gave them additional money to carry them through during this exten-

sion, but when we enact a final bill, as I hope we will do next week, then the amounts that the States would have received would be deducted from the amounts that we provide for them for the fiscal year 1998.

For example, the amount each State will receive in the surface transportation program, so-called STP funds, under ISTEA II will be reduced by their portion of the more than \$1 billion provided in STP funds under the 6-month extension.

Now, there are several reasons why this extension reduction is necessary. First of all, ISTEA II provides money for each fiscal year 1998 through 2003. It does not provide a half-year amount for 1998. If this reduction is not required, States would be receiving one-and-a-half times as much as they should for 1998. In other words, we give them the entire 1998 money in the bill, and we have also previously given them half of that so it doesn't make sense for them to have one-and-a-half times as much money for 1998 as required. Indeed, our bill would be subject to a point of order.

Second, a reduction ensures that each State will receive money based on the new formula provided in ISTEA II instead of the old formula or amounts received in the past. We worked hard to bring this new formula up to date in order to make it fairer, and we believe we have achieved that.

So, Mr. President, this technical and noncontroversial amendment has been cleared by both sides. We want to make sure that this amendment is available for any of the States who would choose to review it. They can get in touch with me and we will give them a copy, obviously.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

AMENDMENT NO. 1719

(Purpose: To include the enhancement of safety at at-grade railway-highway crossings and the achievement of national transportation safety goals in the purpose of the intelligent transportation system program)

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, I send an amendment to the desk and ask for its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Montana [Mr. BAUCUS], for Mr. KERREY, proposes an amendment numbered 1719.

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

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

The amendment is as follows:

On page 385, strike lines 13 and 14 and insert the following: increasing the number and severity of collisions;

"(14) to encourage the use of intelligent transportation systems to promote the achievement of national transportation safety goals, including safety at at-grade Railway-highway crossings; and

"(15) to accommodate the needs of all users of".

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, this amendment that I am offering on behalf of Senator KERREY from Nebraska adds another goal to the intelligent transportation system's research program in the underlying bill. It would add the achievement of national transportation safety goals, including at-grade railway-highway crossings to the ITS, intelligence transportation system program.

I think it is a good idea to enhance the ITS program. We all know the problems of rail crossings. There are a lot of accidents and deaths, regrettably, at railway-highway crossings. This added language will help in the development of the ITS to try to find ways to minimize these types of things.

I urge that we agree to this amendment.

Mr. CHAFEE. Mr. President, this amendment is acceptable to this side.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, the amendment is agreed to.

The amendment (No. 1719) was agreed to.

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, I move to reconsider the vote.

Mr. CHAFEE. I move to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 1720 TO AMENDMENT NO. 1676

(Purpose: To include the development of techniques to eliminate at-grade railway-highway crossings in the goals of the innovative bridge research and construction program)

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, I send an amendment to the desk and ask for its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Montana [Mr. BAUCUS], for Mr. KERREY, proposes an amendment numbered 1720.

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

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

The amendment is as follows:

On page 371, strike lines 6 and 7 and insert the following:

"in highway bridges and structures;

"(5) the development of cost-effective and innovative techniques to separate vehicle and pedestrian traffic from railroad traffic and

"(6) the development of highway bridges and".

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, this amendment would add to the types of works the Secretary should undertake with regard to innovative bridge research. The Secretary would have the flexibility to look at innovative techniques to separate vehicle and pedestrian traffic from railroad traffic. It is