

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, was read the third time, and passed, and a motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

FURTHER MESSAGE FROM THE  
SENATE

A further message from the Senate by Mr. Lundregan, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed a bill of the following title in which concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 944. An act to amend Public Law 105-188 to provide for the mineral leasing of certain Indian lands in Oklahoma.

EXTENSION OF AIRPORT  
IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take from the Speaker's table the Senate bill (S. 1467) to extend the funding levels for aviation programs for 60 days, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Pennsylvania?

Mr. OBERSTAR. Mr. Speaker, reserving the right to object, under my reservation. I yield to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY), the ranking member on the Committee on Appropriations.

(Mr. OBEY asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

□ 2350

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding to me and let me apologize to the House ahead of time for the length of time of this reservation but this will in fact save time by avoiding the necessity to use a rule.

Mr. Speaker, this process will have the unfortunate but completely avoidable effect of shutting down the Airport Improvement Program. On Saturday, the authorization for the airport program, AIP, will expire and the program will shut down for the rest of this fiscal year unless an extension is provided. S. 1467, as passed by the Senate, would provide the simple extension needed to keep this program afloat.

Nonetheless, this process makes in order a motion to amend that simple extension with the text of AIR-21, the multiyear FAA reauthorization bill that is replete with controversial provisions, including taking \$39 billion in spending off budget, airport slot extensions at O'Hare and National Airports, and other matters that will not be easily resolved. Since we know that no conference on the FAA reauthorization could possibly be completed by tomorrow, in fact the Senate has not even passed their version of the reauthorization bill, adoption of the pending motion to amend S. 1467 will have the effect of shutting down the AIP program.

Mr. Speaker, last year the Committee on Appropriations sought to

provide a full year of funding at \$1.95 billion for the AIP program for fiscal 1999. We were denied in that effort by authorizers who insisted on less than a full year's funding.

We have now had two short-term extensions of that program since the fiscal 1999 transportation appropriations bill was signed into law last year because of the authorizers refusal to agree to full-year funding. The first extension continued the program from March 31 through May 31 of 1999, the second extension was included in the fiscal 1999 Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act and continued the program only through August 6 at the insistence of the authorizing committees, despite the desire of the Committee on Appropriations to extend the program through the end of the year.

Now we find ourselves facing yet another shutdown of the program because of the insistence of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure in using the AIP Program as a pawn to get the Senate to the conference table on AIR-21. I strongly object to the process that the gentleman from Pennsylvania is using to get to the conference with the Senate. There is no need to hold our airports hostage and deny them the additional funding that they are due this year because of disagreements over slots, off-budget provisions, and other controversial issues in the FAA reauthorization bill. There is absolutely no need to shut the an airport program down. It is completely avoidable. Yet that will be the result of the actions proposed by the gentleman.

If the airport grant program is shut down after August 6, airports could lose \$290 million in fiscal 1999 funding that we intended to provide this year. The loss of that \$290 million in AIP funding would mean the following:

States would not get their remaining 15 percent of their AIP apportionments, a loss of \$54 million. That means that small commercial airports and general aviation airports funded by the States are effectively cut by 15 percent. For example, California will lose \$4.5 million; Texas will lose \$3.7; New York will lose \$2.3 million; Pennsylvania, Illinois, and Michigan will lose \$1.6 million each.

Cargo airports will not get the remaining 15 percent of their entitlements, a loss of \$7 million.

Noise projects will be underfunded by 30 percent, a loss of \$71 million.

High priority capacity and safety projects, under the discretionary set-aside for larger airports, will be underfunded, a loss of \$149 million.

Military airports will not get their remaining set-aside, a loss of \$9 million.

Mr. Speaker, I will include a list in my extension of remarks of airports that will be cut.

Mr. Speaker, S. 1467, adopted by the Senate last Friday, would allow the airport program to continue for another 60 days through the end of the fiscal year and into October. This is a

simple extension of the program that will otherwise expire, and we ought to adopt it without amendment.

Mr. Speaker, I believe this action is unwise also because I strongly disagree with the provisions of AIR-21, which take \$39 billion in aviation spending off budget over 4 years beginning in 2001. CBO estimates that \$13.6 billion of this spending will come out of the surplus revenues and that the bill would require a downward adjustment in the discretionary caps of \$26.5 billion over 4 years.

We have already exhausted the on-budget surplus for fiscal 2000 due to emergency designations, directed scorekeeping adjustments, and other actions taken by the majority in the 2000 appropriations bills considered by the House so far.

The tax bill just passed today assumes another \$792 billion in surplus revenues over 10 years. Now we are apparently going to spend surplus revenues for aviation beginning in 2001 before we consider any other domestic needs for defense, cancer research, education, drug treatment, national parks, law enforcement or other important priorities. Under AIR-21, by the year 2004 aviation spending will consume nearly \$1 out of every \$4 of the projected remaining on-budget surplus revenues not required for the massive tax cut package just adopted today.

Moreover, AIR-21 will result in \$26 billion less room under the existing discretionary caps that are already squeezing high priority programs. Under the budget that the House has already adopted for the year 2000, a 32 percent cut would be required in programs funded under the labor, health, education bill. That means a \$5 billion cut in NIH, a \$1.5 million cut in Head Start, a \$2.5 billion cut in Pell Grants for college students, and a \$2.5 billion in Title I, which would cut reading and math to help 3.8 million students.

Airport infrastructure is important, but do we really believe that airports are a higher priority than education, which could face even deeper cuts under the caps if AIR-21 is enacted? I certainly do not.

What AIR-21 offers is a choice between binge buying on aviation and thoughtful budgeting where we carefully balance all domestic priorities. If my colleagues believe we should not lavish a significant portion of the surplus on aviation without examining the competing needs in education, biomedical research, veterans care and defense, then they will not believe this action occurring tonight is the proper action.

So, Mr. Speaker, I simply state my opposition to what is happening here, and I thank the gentleman for his courtesy.

Mr. Speaker, I submit for the RECORD the information referred to earlier regarding airports that will be cut:

Pease International Tradeport in New Hampshire  
Myrtle Beach International in South Carolina