

We also know from Northern Illinois University, as well as from the tragedies at Virginia Tech and Tucson, that we need to fill the gaps in the Federal gun background check system.

No one is proposing to take guns away from responsible American hunters and law-abiding citizens. The Supreme Court has made it clear that individuals have a right to own guns. I respect that decision. But the Court has also said that the second amendment is “not a right to keep and carry any weapon whatsoever in any manner whatsoever and for whatever purpose.”

For years, laws on the books have prohibited those with histories of serious mental illness and substance abuse from buying guns. State agencies and Federal agencies need to work more closely together to make sure the background check system is fully updated with this critical information.

Today is a time for our country to remember the lives and mourn the loss at Northern Illinois University of five promising young Americans whose life stories were cruelly cut short 3 years ago. But as we look back, we must also—as they say at Northern; their slogan—move “Forward, Together Forward” in the true Northern Illinois University spirit.

Mr. President, I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Mr. President, might I ask, what is the pending business?

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

FAA AIR TRANSPORTATION MODERNIZATION AND SAFETY IMPROVEMENT ACT

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of S. 223, which the clerk will report.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 223) to modernize the air traffic control system, improve the safety, reliability, and availability of transportation by air in the United States, provide for modernization of the air traffic control system, reauthorize the Federal Aviation Administration, and for other purposes.

Pending:

Wicker modified amendment No. 14, to exclude employees of the Transportation Security Administration from the collective bargaining rights of Federal employees and provide employment rights and an employee engagement mechanism for passenger and property screeners.

Blunt amendment No. 5, to require the Under Secretary of Transportation for Security to approve applications from airports to authorize passenger and property screening to be carried out by a qualified private screening company.

Paul amendment No. 21, to reduce the total amount authorized to be appropriated for the Federal Aviation Administration for fiscal year 2011 to the total amount authorized to be appropriated for the administration for fiscal year 2008.

Rockefeller (for Wyden) amendment No. 27, to increase the number of test sites in the National Airspace System used for unmanned aerial vehicles and to require one of those test sites to include a significant portion of public lands.

Inhofe amendment No. 6, to provide liability protection to volunteer pilot nonprofit organizations that fly for public benefit and to the pilots and staff of such nonprofit organizations.

Inhofe amendment No. 7, to require the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration to initiate a new rulemaking proceeding with respect to the flight time limitations and rest requirements for supplemental operations before any of such limitations or requirements be altered.

Rockefeller (for Ensign) amendment No. 32, to improve provisions relating to certification and flight standards for military remotely piloted aerial systems in the National Airspace System.

McCain amendment No. 4, to repeal the Essential Air Service Program.

Rockefeller (for Leahy) amendment No. 50, to amend title 1 of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 to include nonprofit and volunteer ground and air ambulance crew members and first responders for certain benefits and to clarify the liability protection for volunteer pilots that fly for public benefit.

Reid amendment No. 54, to allow airports that receive airport improvement grants for the purchase of land to lease the land and develop the land in a manner compatible with noise buffering purposes.

Reid amendment No. 55, to require the Secretary of the Interior to convey certain Federal land to the city of Mesquite, NV.

Udall (NM)/Bingaman amendment No. 49, to authorize Dona Ana County, NM, to exchange certain land conveyed to the county for airport purposes.

Udall (NM) amendment No. 51, to require that all advanced imaging technology used as a primary screening method for passengers be equipped with automatic target recognition software.

Nelson (NE) amendment No. 58, to impose a criminal penalty for unauthorized recording or distribution of images produced using advanced imaging technology during screenings of individuals at airports and upon entry to Federal buildings.

Paul amendment No. 18, to strike the provisions relating to clarifying a memorandum of understanding between the Federal Aviation Administration and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration.

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Mr. President, my cochair, Senator HUTCHISON, is on the floor, and I know she wishes to speak.

It occurs to me we are back on the Federal aviation bill. We have been on this bill for several years. There is an interesting sort of dilemma which has developed. If one listens to the conversation on the floor and around in the hallways, everything has to do with slots—how many flights in and out of National Airport, what are we

going to do about the west coast, Seattle, and all the rest of them. Actually, that is a very small part of the overall bill, reflecting on the overall health and progress of the Federal Aviation Administration, compared to things such as NextGen, the new air traffic control system entirely, and a variety of other things which are already in the bill which the Senate passed last year 93 to nothing. So I am losing my patience a little bit with slots.

KAY BAILEY HUTCHISON and I agree on most things in our work, and we have an amendment. Other people seem to be going back and forth—they are amenable, then they are not amenable—and we are running out of time. I think the leader, with that in mind, is going to ask for cloture on this to sort of force everybody's hand.

What I am really suggesting is that those who are working on slots try to come to an agreement during the course of the rest of this day because I think we are talking only about that, and perhaps a little bit of tomorrow morning. Then I think the Senate just kind of—and I know the leader on our side—has to do the bill. We have been debating these slots for 6½ months this year. We did it for a whole bunch of months last year. Progress is made, progress is unmade; people agree, people don't agree. Senator HUTCHISON and I are getting a little bit frustrated by that. We think we have a good amendment, but let's see.

So we have some pending amendments. I am hopeful we will be able to work through them this evening and the remainder of the week. I think we have made reasonable progress on some matters, but on the question of the bill itself and the substance of the bill and those amendments which are germane to the substance of the bill, I think we have made a lot of progress. A lot of that progress actually comes from last year on our unanimous vote to approve this issue. So I believe we can and must finish this bill this week. I think my cochair agrees with me on that. If not, we risk further extensions of the FAA and a less stable agency.

Again, I would point out that I think we are on our 18th extension of this massive bill keep all of our planes in the air and everybody at work and includes safety and all kinds of things. We need a very swift resolution. So I urge the Senate to promptly move forward on the passage of the FAA reauthorization act.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Texas.

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, I am fully in support of what the chairman has said. We have been on this bill now for over a week of actual Senate time. It is an important bill for our country because we are trying to set in place the next generation of air traffic control. America has over 50 percent of the air traffic in the world. We need to be the leader of the next generation of