

operational right-of-way, I can foresee wetlands being filled, sensitive habitat threatened, and resources spoiled, all without any environmental review. There is a right way and a wrong way to expedite projects, and I believe this is the wrong way. I understand this was a necessary concession in order to get a conference report agreed to, but I hope it will be addressed in the future.

The second concern I have is the impact of the bill on my State, Connecticut. The Federal highway program is just that: a Federal program that is intended to address the needs of the national transportation system. Nonetheless, our country's different regions have particular needs. Connecticut, and the Northeast in general, have urgent needs when it comes to transportation. My State has one of our Nation's oldest transportation systems, because Connecticut has been around a long time, one of the Nation's highest ratios of traffic volume to miles of road, and is a frequent pass-through State for commuters throughout the Northeast. Federal transportation funding should go to areas with the greatest need, just as happens with other government programs such as farm subsidies and disaster relief. Connecticut residents do not protest these agricultural support programs despite our paying a disproportionate share of taxes for them, but we deserve to receive adequate funds to address our unique transportation needs. Under this bill, Connecticut will receive inadequate funding. I would urge my colleagues to reconsider this problem, as well as the 95 percent minimum rate of return for all States, during deliberations on the next transportation bill just as we did during consideration of the 2005 transportation bill.

Finally, I want to take a moment to address a growing concern across the country: the future of our Highway Trust Fund. Since the establishment of the Federal highway system, we have utilized a user-fee system to fund our transportation programs. That system served us well for years, and relied on a gas tax to fill the Highway Trust Fund, which in turn distributed funds to our States. As is so often the case, with the good comes the bad: as we make cars that are more fuel efficient, thereby cleaning up our air and reducing emissions, we also purchase less gas per mile driven, and the amount of money flowing into the Trust Fund shrinks as a result. The gas tax has stayed static at 18.4 cents per gallon since 1993. Because it is not adjusted for inflation, the federal gas tax has experienced a cumulative loss in purchasing power of 33 percent since 1993. For 4 years now, the Trust Fund has been running a deficit and we have had to bail it out with transfers from the Treasury. This is not the way the system was meant to work, and it is not a way it can long survive.

The blame lies at all of our feet. Neither party has had the courage to face the reality that we are running out of

money for our roads and bridges. Instead of dealing with the problem, we have continued to bail out the trust fund, hoping that some future Congress will take necessary steps to fix this problem. I applaud my colleague from Wyoming, Senator ENZI, who took a stand and proposed adjusting the gas tax for inflation, basically a half-cent a gallon increase. This could have gone a long way to reducing the amount of money we need to use to bailout the trust fund. Unfortunately, we never had a chance to discuss the matter. I understand that colleagues do not want to talk about raising taxes. But in the end we have no choice but to talk about raising taxes if we want our transportation infrastructure to keep pace with our people's needs.

We need leadership from Congress, and the President, to face the facts: our transportation system is both broke and broken. The system does not have funds for some basic repairs, let alone to make the new investments for infrastructure we urgently need. In 2002, the United States was ranked fifth, in terms of infrastructure quality, worldwide. Today, we have dropped to twenty-fourth. We have fallen 19 places down in less than a decade.

Unfortunately, the large-scale investments we need will not be possible until we can fix the funding issue. The Simpson-Bowles Commission recommended a 5-cent per year increase to the gas tax for 3 years. Others have recommended shifting to a system that charges users for vehicle-miles-travelled. Such a VMT would ensure that those driving fuel efficient, electric, or alternative fuel vehicles pay for the wear-and-tear to the roads they cause. Although I will not be a member of the Senate when the next transportation bill is debated, I would urge my colleagues to begin to address this issue before the trust fund goes broke once again. Washington must have the courage to keep all options on the table, and then do what works to fix this problem.

In closing, I wish to again express my gratitude to Senators BOXER and INHOFE. This is a true jobs bill, and it will guarantee that millions of construction workers are still employed come Sunday, that student loan interest rates do not double this school year, and that our truly important flood insurance program will be reauthorized.

I thank Senator BOXER, Senator INHOFE, the staff of the EPW committee, as well as the staffers at the Departments of Transportation both in Washington and Connecticut, for their efforts in bringing this bill to fruition.

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, I forgot to thank my own staff, which would be very important to do. Elizabeth Weiner, Elizabeth Craddock, Jane Campbell, my chief of staff, and my entire staff for their tremendous work—we are all going to get a good rest in the week to come—and other staff, Tanner Johnson in particular, no

longer with my staff but who put the original bill together.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

CONDITIONAL ADJOURNMENT OR RECESS OF THE SENATE AND ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the Senate proceed to immediate consideration of S. Con. Res. 51, the adjournment resolution which was submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 51) providing for a conditional adjournment or recess of the Senate and an adjournment of the House of Representatives.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to the concurrent resolution.

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the concurrent resolution be agreed to and the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate.

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

The concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 51) was agreed to, as follows:

S. CON. RES. 51

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring). That when the Senate recesses or adjourns on any day from Friday, June 29, 2012, through Monday, July 2, 2012, on a motion offered pursuant to this concurrent resolution by its Majority Leader or his designee, it stand recessed or adjourned until 12:00 noon on Monday, July 9, 2012, or such other time on that day as may be specified by its Majority Leader or his designee in the motion to recess or adjourn, or until the time of any reassembly pursuant to section 2 of this concurrent resolution, whichever occurs first; and that when the House adjourns on any legislative day from Friday, June 29, 2012, through Friday, July 6, 2012, on a motion offered pursuant to this concurrent resolution by its majority leader or his designee, it stand adjourned until 2:00 p.m. on Monday, July 9, 2012, or until the time of any reassembly pursuant to section 2 of this concurrent resolution, whichever occurs first.

SEC. 2. The Majority Leader of the Senate and the Speaker of the House, or their respective designees, acting jointly after consultation with the Minority Leader of the Senate and the Minority Leader of the House, shall notify the Members of the Senate and House, respectively, to reassemble at such place and time as they may designate if, in their opinion, the public interest shall warrant it.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

SMALL BUSINESS JOBS AND TAX RELIEF ACT—MOTION TO PROCEED—Continued

Mr. REID. Mr. President, we are on the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 341, S. 2237; is that true?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is correct.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I have a cloture motion at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The bill clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 341, S. 2237, the Small Business Jobs and Tax Relief Act.

Harry Reid, Kent Conrad, Tom Harkin, Richard Blumenthal, Jeff Bingaman, Carl Levin, Al Franken, Daniel K. Inouye, Richard J. Durbin, Benjamin L. Cardin, Max Baucus, Charles E. Schumer, Jeff Merkley, Patty Murray, John D. Rockefeller IV, John F. Kerry.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum under rule XXII be waived; that at 2:15 p.m., Tuesday, July 10, there be 10 minutes equally divided between the two leaders or their designees prior to a vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the motion to proceed to S. 2237.

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

UNANIMOUS-CONSENT AGREEMENT—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that on Tuesday, July 10, 2012, at 11:30 a.m., the Senate proceed to executive session to consider the following nomination: Calendar No. 661; that there be 30 minutes of debate equally divided in the usual form; that upon the use or yielding back of that time, the Senate proceed to vote on that matter without intervening action or debate, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate; that no further motions be in order; that any related statements be printed in the RECORD; that President Obama be immediately notified of the Senate's action, and the Senate then resume legislative session.

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

NOMINATIONS DISCHARGED

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session and the Foreign Relations Committee be discharged from further consideration of Presidential Nomination 1680 and the Senate proceed to its consideration; that the nomination be confirmed, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, there be no intervening action or debate; that no further motions be in order to the nomination; that any related statements be printed in the RECORD; and that President Obama be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

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

The nomination considered and confirmed is as follows:

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Derek J. Mitchell, of Connecticut, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Union of Burma.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Commerce be discharged from further consideration of PN 1442, 1461, 1462, 1671, 1377, and 1734; that the nominations be confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table; that there be no intervening action or debate; that no further motions be in order to the nominations; that any related statements be printed in the RECORD; and that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

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

The nominations considered and confirmed are as follows:

COAST GUARD

The following named officers for appointment to the grade indicated in the United States Coast Guard under title 14, U.S.C., section 271:

To be rear admiral upper half

- Rear Admiral (1h) Daniel B. Abel
- Rear Admiral (1h) Frederick J. Kenney Jr
- Rear Admiral (1h) Marshall B. Lytle III
- Rear Admiral (1h) Fred M. Midgett
- Rear Admiral (1h) Karl L. Schultz
- Rear Admiral (1h) Cari B. Thomas
- Rear Admiral (1h) Christopher J. Tomney

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Coast Guard Reserve to the grade indicated under the 10 U.S.C., section 12203:

To be rear admiral upper half

- Rear Adm. (1h) John S. Welch

The following named officers for appointment to the grade indicated in the United States Coast Guard under title 14, U.S.C. section 211(A)(2):

To be lieutenant commander

- Jason A. Boyer
- Eric A. Cain
- William E. Donohue
- Roy Eidem
- Matthew A. Pickard

The following named officers as members of the Coast Guard permanent commissioned teaching staff for appointment in the grade

indicated in the United States Coast Guard under title 14, U.S.C., section 188:

To be commander

- Russell E. Bowman

To be lieutenant commander

- Joseph D. Brown

To be lieutenant

- Meghan K. Steirhaus

NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION

Subject to qualifications provided by law, the following for permanent appointment to the grade indicated in the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration:

To be ensign

- Lucas D. Johnson
- Kevin G. Doremus
- Michael N. Hirsch
- Joshua D. Witmer
- Jared R. Halonen
- Daniel P. Langis
- Andrew R. Clos
- John R. Kidd
- Aras J. Zygas
- Refael W. Klein
- David B. Keith
- Whitley J. Gilbert
- Kelsey E. Jeffers
- Kasey M. Sims
- Junie H. Cassone
- Ricardo Rodriguez Perez
- Aaron D. Colohan
- Veronica J. Brieno Rankin
- Chelsea D. Frate
- Theresa A. Madsen

Subject to qualifications provided by law, the following for permanent appointment to the grade indicated in the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration:

To be lieutenant (junior grade)

- Kyle S. Salling
- Daniel D. Smith
- Anthony R. Klemm
- Richard J. Park
- David J. Rodziewicz
- Andrea L. Proie
- Joseph T. Phillips
- Kelli-Ann E. Bliss
- Larry V. Thomas, Jr.
- Leslie Z. Flowers
- Shannon K. Hefferan

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to consider Calendar Nos. 726, 764, 765, 766, 767, 768, 769, 770, 771, 772, 773, 774, 775, 776, 778, 819, 820, 821, 822, 823, and 824; that the nominations be confirmed en bloc; that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table; that there be no intervening action or debate; that no further motions be in order to any of the nominations; that any related statements be printed in the RECORD; and that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

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

The nominations considered and confirmed en bloc are as follows:

NOMINATIONS IN THE AIR FORCE

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Air Force to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be general

- Lt. Gen. Herbert J. Carlisle

NATIONAL BOARD FOR EDUCATION SCIENCES

Larry V. Hedges, of Illinois, to be a Member of the Board of Directors of the National