

targets in the queues at the TSA lines and at the ticket counters.

This bill will improve the background checks and security screenings for airport workers and prevent hackers from potentially gaining control of an airplane. This bill also requires that the FAA develop standards on how aircraft manufacturers can keep flight control systems separate from inflight passenger entertainment systems. Remember what was shown on "60 Minutes" about the takeover and control of a car by someone going on the Internet and hacking into the car's entertainment system.

The bottom line is, this is a good bill. It is the result of a hard-earned collaborative effort. I thank Senator THUNE and his staff for their good work and their good will in our negotiations. I also thank the Members of our staff who worked endlessly to get us to this point. After the vote, I am going to read a list of their names because I want them to be recognized.

To our colleagues in the Senate, I thank you for working with Senator THUNE and me on the creation and development of the bill up to this point and now the passage of the bill. I suspect the Senate will respond overwhelmingly and I certainly urge that result.

Madam President, we have just a couple minutes until the vote.

I suggest the absence of a quorum. The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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 Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

Mr. NELSON. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that I be permitted to speak for up to 5 minutes.

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

Mr. NELSON. Madam President, we are trying to get clearance for a package of 26 noncontroversial amendments that Senator THUNE and I put together in a package. They are noncontroversial. They are amendments sponsored by a multiplicity of Senators, a whole array of different things that are needed.

We have one Senator objecting to proceeding with the package of 26 amendments. We are trying to get that objection removed; otherwise, we are going to be in a position of going to the bill, which we will have the votes to pass, but without these 26 amendments. These are amendments by Senators HATCH, MCCAIN, THUNE, MORAN, BROWN, MURPHY, KAINE, FEINSTEIN, JOHNSON, LEAHY, INHOFE, CORNYN, MARKEY, KIRK, CORNYN, DURBIN, MORAN, WARNER, SULLIVAN, HIRONO, HOEVEN, HEITKAMP, ISAKSON, MURRAY, and TESTER.

All are noncontroversial. But we have one objection with regard to this package, which is noncontroversial.

I yield the floor. I suggest the absence of a quorum. The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, we have pending before us final passage on the FAA reauthorization. We have been waiting to see if there were not another 26 amendments that have been cleared on both sides that we can get added to the bill. Despite our best efforts, we have an objection to that. We have been trying all morning to get that cleared, but that has not been possible.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

AMERICA'S SMALL BUSINESS TAX RELIEF ACT OF 2015

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of H.R. 636, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 636) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes.

The amendment was ordered to be engrossed, and the bill to be read a third time.

The bill was read the third time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The bill having been read the third time, the question is, Shall the bill pass?

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) is necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. FLAKE). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 95, nays 3, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 47 Leg.] YEAS—95

- Alexander, Ayotte, Baldwin, Barrasso, Bennet, Blumenthal, Blunt, Booker, Boozman, Brown, Burr, Cantwell, Capito, Cardin, Carper, Casey, Cassidy, Coats, Cochran, Collins, Coons

- Corker, Cornyn, Cotton, Crapo, Daines, Donnelly, Durbin, Enzi, Ernst, Feinstein, Fischer, Flake, Franken, Gardner, Gillibrand, Graham, Grassley, Hatch, Heinrich, Heitkamp, Heller, Hirono, Hoeven, Inhofe, Isakson, Johnson, Kaine, King, Kirk, Klobuchar, Lankford, Leahy, Manchin, Markey, McCain, McCaskill, McConnell, Menendez, Merkley, Mikulski, Moran, Murkowski, Murphy, Murray, Nelson, Paul, Perdue, Peters, Portman, Reed, Reid, Risch, Roberts, Rounds, Sasse, Schatz, Schumer, Scott, Sessions, Shaheen, Shelby, Stabenow, Sullivan, Tester, Thune, Tillis, Toomey, Udall, Vitter, Warner, Warren, Whitehouse, Wicker, Wyden

NAYS—3

- Boxer, Lee, Rubio

NOT VOTING—2

- Cruz, Sanders

The bill (H.R. 636), as amended, was passed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Dakota.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 10 minutes.

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

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I rise today to express my appreciation to my colleagues for the passage of the Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act of 2016. By passing this legislation, which I offered with the Commerce Committee's ranking member, Senator NELSON, and our Aviation Subcommittee leaders, Senator AYOTTE and Senator CANTWELL, the Senate is seeking to end a string of short extensions with a comprehensive reform proposal now on its way to the House of Representatives. Bipartisan efforts at both the Commerce Committee and on the Senate floor made an already strong bill even better.

Only weeks ago, horrific attacks by ISIS created new concern for air travelers. Recognizing the need to enhance security, Senators from both sides of the aisle offered amendments to strengthen safety and security protections for passengers in this aviation bill. To guard against the threat of airport insiders helping terrorists, we added provisions that I authored along with Senator NELSON to improve the scrutiny of individuals applying to work in secure airport areas.

For the first time, we put requirements in place so applicants needing access to secure areas of airports can be denied security credential if they have been convicted of embezzlement, racketeering, robbery, sabotage, immigration law violations, or assault with a deadly weapon.

While very few criminals are terrorists, it is not at all uncommon for terrorists to get their start as criminals. The Brussels attackers, for example, were known to the police as criminals long before they carried out terrorist

attacks. Ensuring that dangerous criminals don't work behind the scenes at airports is one important thing we can do to reduce the threats facing airport passengers. Tightening the vetting process for airport employees is especially critical, as many experts believe the recent bombing of a Russian passenger jet leaving Egypt had help from an aviation insider.

Our bill also includes security provisions to better safeguard public areas outside the security checkpoints at airports and to help reduce passenger backups. These reforms could help prevent a future attack, like the one in the Brussels terminal last month, which targeted a crowd of passengers in an area where the attackers didn't even need tickets.

While many of our security enhancements addressed problems highlighted by recent attacks, none of these proposals were cobbled together in a rush to do something. All of the security proposals added to this bill have existed for months and were developed as a result of congressional oversight, independent evaluations of agencies, and the study of existing problems. What recent attacks by ISIS did create is new urgency to enact these security safeguards as the threat of terrorism remains a menace.

As I have mentioned more than once, this legislation has been praised for the many ways it helps airline passengers. Under this bill, airlines will be required to return fees if they lose or significantly delay delivery of passengers' luggage. We also require airlines to automatically return fees for services purchased but not delivered so travelers don't have to go through the hassle of trying to reclaim their money from an airline.

Because many customers are frustrated by lengthy legal jargon that can make it difficult to understand add-on costs, our bill creates a new and easy-to-read uniform standard for disclosing baggage, ticket change, seat selection, and other fees. We even help families with children find flights where they can sit together without additional costs by requiring airlines to tell purchasers about available seat locations at the time of booking.

A Washington Post consumer columnist called our bill "one of the most passenger-friendly Federal Aviation Administration reauthorization bills in a generation."

I am proud that the FAA bill before the Senate today is the product of a bipartisan process. Over at the Commerce Committee, we approved 57 amendments before this bill came to the floor, and 60 percent of those amendments came from Members of the minority. Here on the Senate floor, we approved an additional 19 amendments.

In addition to helping passengers and enhancing security, this legislation addresses a number of other priorities, including the cyber security of aircraft, the aircraft design approval process,

undue regulatory burdens on non-commercial pilots, airport infrastructure, rural air service, lithium battery safety, mental health screening for pilots, communicable disease preparedness, drone safety, and many other important areas. Without going through them in detail, the bill's provisions for unmanned aerial systems are groundbreaking.

Twenty years from now, when drones play significant roles in our economy and making the public safer, Congress will look back at this bill as landmark legislation. Provisions in this bill will give the FAA authority to address safety issues unique to drones and advance the development of drone technology.

Thanks to this legislation, the FAA will be able to consider and grant permission for new and safe drone usage, stop dangerous practices, and deploy new tools to put sensitive parts of our national airspace under restricted access for drones.

Finally, as I have noted, Ranking Member NELSON, Senator AYOTTE, and Senator CANTWELL deserve high praise for their collaboration on this legislation. Senator NELSON, in particular, has been a real partner in the effort, and I want to express my sincere thanks to him and to his talented staff.

I also want to acknowledge the important contributions of Finance Committee Chairman HATCH, Ranking Member WYDEN, and their staffs. Without the Finance Committee provisions they provided for revenue and expenditure authority, we would not have an FAA bill.

I also want to thank Leader MCCONNELL, his lead liaison to the Commerce Committee, Scott Rabb, and Leader REID for helping us get this bill passed.

I also appreciate the Senators and their staff members who worked with us so that we could include so many amendments here on the floor.

Finally, it goes without saying that I want to thank my own staff for their great work on this bill, especially Nick Rossi, Adrian Arnakis, Bailey Edwards, Michael Reynolds, Jessica McBride, Missye Brickell, Suzanne Gillen, Jaclyn Keshian, Christopher Loring, Rebecca Seidel, Cheri Pascoe, Peter Feldman, Andrew Timm, Frederick Hill, and Lauren Hammond. Long hours and even a few all-nighters have been put into this bill over the course of many months. I am the first to say that nothing consequential or substantial gets done around this place without the important, hard work of the very talented and skilled staff. I am blessed on the Commerce Committee to be surrounded with people who care passionately about these issues, who work very diligently to get the best possible outcomes and results. I am grateful for the contributions of our staff and those of Senator NELSON's staff and of the many Members who were involved in shaping this bill. It is another accomplishment that we can all be proud of.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, the feeling is mutual. I made my comments earlier, so I won't go into the substance of the bill. Senator THUNE has certainly been a delight to work with, as was his committee staff.

I wish to personally thank our staff: Tom Chapman, Jenny Solomon, Chris Day, Mohsin Syed, Melissa Alvarado, Laura Ponto, Dan Hurd, Renae Black, Maria Stratienko, Nick Russell, Christian Fjeld, Brian No, Peder Magee, Meeran Ahn, Brad Torppey, and our staff director Kim Lipsky. I also wish to thank the Democratic staff here on the floor—they may make this place run day in and day out—Gary Myrick, Tim Mitchell, Trisha Engle, Dan Tinsley, and all the cloakroom staff.

I thank the Senate for responding so affirmatively to this FAA bill. Now let's get the House to understand the importance of this bill so we can get it into law.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Dakota.

AMENDMENT NO. 3799

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the title amendment at the desk be agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment (No. 3799) was agreed to, as follows:

(Purpose: To amend the title)

Amend the title so as to read: "An Act to amend title 49, United States Code, to authorize appropriations for the Federal Aviation Administration for fiscal years 2016 through 2017, and for other purposes."

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. BURR. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to make some remarks on the Burr-Tillis amendment No. 3175 to the Energy bill.

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

COROLLA WILD HORSES PROTECTION
AMENDMENT

Mr. BURR. Mr. President and colleagues, I am embarrassed that I am having to come to the floor to talk about an amendment that makes so much sense, that embraces everything that I think the legislative branch and, more importantly, the American people support: the protection of a species.

I rise today to ask my colleagues to support the Corolla Wild Horses Protection Act. The amendment mirrors legislation Senator TILLIS and I introduced, S. 1204. This bill passed the House twice, in 2012 and 2013.

Let me be specific. This bill directs the Secretary of the Interior to enter into an agreement with the Corolla Wild Horses Fund to provide for the management of free-roaming wild horses in and around Currituck National Wildlife Refuge.

As I have learned, North Carolina is mostly inhabited by people from Virginia and Maryland—up and down the east coast—in the summer. As a matter

of fact, as to the homes in the northern portion of the Outer Banks where the wild horses are found, where there isn't a road, 60 percent of the homes are owned by Virginians, not North Carolinians. These horses have existed there for hundreds of years. As a matter of fact, these horses have been such an important part of North Carolina's history that in 2010 it was made North Carolina's State horse.

People have seen these horses on the beach and between cottages. They have co-existed with the habitat for over 200 years. The turtles, ducks, and wildlife have thrived. The species of that habitat have survived because there is no better protector of the species than these animals. They eat what they need without removing the roots, which is what helps them to repopulate and stay alive.

Here is the problem: This herd has been mandated to be held at 60 horses, and every scientific study on genetics shows you have to have more than 100 or 120 to have genetic sustainability.

What are we proposing? This act proposes that we bring 20 horses from the Shackleford reserve and integrate them with the horses on the Outer Banks, which is a mere 2 hours away. This herd is similar from the standpoint of its creation. By doing this, we will begin to inject genetics into this so we don't have the genetic deformities that are beginning to be experienced with the Corolla horses. If we don't act now, we could lose these horses, and it is all due to genetic inbreeding.

The reason I am embarrassed to be here is that this is something that ought to be done by unanimous consent. Every person in this body should embrace this legislation. Yet the Fish and Wildlife Service is opposed to this. And there is nothing that says that Fish and Wildlife can't build a fence around the wildlife reserve. It existed for hundreds of years in the wildlife reserve before and after it was designated as a wildlife reserve. As a matter of fact, 70 percent of the land on which these horses roam is private. The land for the wildlife refuge is only 30 percent, but 70 percent of the land is privately owned, and the private landowners are all for making this herd genetically sustainable.

If we don't do this legislatively, let me assure you that the Fish and Wildlife Service is going to hold the number at 60. If they hold the herd at 60, the herd will genetically burn out. I don't know what Fish and Wildlife is going to do. The herd is at 80 today. The herd needs new genetics entered into it to change the trend, but Fish and Wildlife could go out tomorrow and shoot 20 horses. I am sure they would probably tell us that they would take 20 horses and put them somewhere else. Where are they going to put them? Inject them into another genetic herd and increase their sustainability? Maybe so. But if you do it somewhere else, why wouldn't you do the same thing here?

No landowners are clamoring to let this herd die out. As a matter of fact, there are a million and a half people in this country who have expressed support for the sustainability of this herd. But this is where science dictates. Science says that it is not sustainable if you leave this herd without a genetic injection from somewhere else.

This is not a new proposal. It passed in the House twice. It is not a new proposal. Fish and Wildlife has done this in other places. For some reason, they don't want to do it in North Carolina.

The last test for any Member of Congress and anybody in this country should be: What will it cost us to do this? What am I asking you to pay to do this? The answer is zero. There is no Federal cost to this legislation. We can sustain the herd for the future, and it will not cost taxpayers anything. We have a private entity that will take responsibility for the management of the fund.

We don't in any way, shape, or form limit Fish and Wildlife from the standpoint of their ability to fence off whatever they believe is environmentally sensitive. And we have horses that have lived with ducks, geese, and sea turtles for over 200 years and have never seen a problem with it.

The Presiding Officer has been patient. I say to my colleagues: Don't make a mistake. Support this legislation. It is the right thing to do. It doesn't cost the taxpayers money, and it embraces everything that I think America stands for, and that is the preservation of the history of this country. Believe it or not, these horses represent over 200 years of history in North Carolina, and that is why we made it our State horse.

I thank the Presiding Officer, and I yield back my time.

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 2:15 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 12:54 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. PORTMAN).

ENERGY POLICY MODERNIZATION ACT OF 2015

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of S. 2012, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2012) to provide for the modernization of the energy policy of the United States, and for other purposes.

Pending:

Murkowski amendment No. 2953, in the nature of a substitute.

Murkowski (for Cassidy/Markey) amendment No. 2954 (to amendment No. 2953), to provide for certain increases in, and limitations on, the drawdown and sales of the Strategic Petroleum Reserve.

Murkowski amendment No. 2963 (to amendment No. 2953), to modify a provision relating to bulk-power system reliability impact statements.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

AMENDMENTS NOS. 3276; 3302, AS MODIFIED; 3055; 3050; 3237; 3308; 3286, AS MODIFIED; 3075; 3168; 3292, AS MODIFIED; 3155; 3270; 3313, AS MODIFIED; 3214; 3266; 3310; 3317; 3265, AS MODIFIED; 3012; 3290; 3004; 3233, AS MODIFIED; 3239; 3221; 3203; 3309, AS MODIFIED; 3229; 3251; AND 2963 TO AMENDMENT NO. 2953

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I call up the following amendments en bloc and ask that they be reported by number and be considered en bloc, along with amendment No. 2963, offered by Senator MURKOWSKI: Cantwell amendment No. 3276; Klobuchar amendment No. 3302, as modified; Flake amendment No. 3055; Flake amendment No. 3050; Hatch amendment No. 3237; Murkowski amendment No. 3308; Heller amendment No. 3286, as modified; Vitter amendment No. 3075; Portman amendment No. 3168; Shaheen amendment No. 3292, as modified; Heinrich amendment No. 3155; Manchin amendment No. 3270; Cantwell amendment No. 3313, as modified; Cantwell amendment No. 3214; Vitter amendment No. 3266; Sullivan amendment No. 3310; Heinrich amendment No. 3317; Vitter amendment No. 3265, as modified; Kaine amendment No. 3012; Alexander amendment No. 3290; Gillibrand amendment No. 3004; Warner amendment No. 3233, as modified; Thune amendment No. 3239; Udall amendment No. 3221; Coons amendment No. 3203; Portman amendment No. 3309, as modified; Flake amendment No. 3229; and Inhofe amendment No. 3251.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the amendments by number.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Alaska [Ms. MURKOWSKI], for herself and others, proposes amendments numbered 3276; 3302, as modified; 3055; 3050; 3237; 3308; 3286, as modified; 3075; 3168; 3292, as modified; 3155; 3270; 3313, as modified; 3214; 3266; 3310; 3317; 3265, as modified; 3012; 3290; 3004; 3233, as modified; 3239; 3221; 3203; 3309, as modified; 3229; and 3251 en bloc to amendment No. 2953.

The amendments are as follows:

AMENDMENT NO. 3276

(Purpose: To strike certain provisions relating to technology demonstration on the distribution system, large-scale geothermal energy, and bio-power initiatives)

Strike section 2303.

Strike section 3009.

Strike section 3017.

AMENDMENT NO. 3302, AS MODIFIED

(Purpose: To modify provisions relating to the energy efficiency materials pilot program)

Beginning on page 37, strike line 16 and all that follows through page 41, line 14 and insert the following:

SEC. 1004. ENERGY EFFICIENCY MATERIALS PILOT PROGRAM.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) APPLICANT.—The term "applicant" means a nonprofit organization that applies for a grant under this section.