

upgrading the Nation's highways, railroads and aviation infrastructure in an era of necessary budget constraint will be especially difficult and will require vision and leadership.

Above all, the new Secretary's top priority must be protecting public safety in all modes of transportation. And, he must apply himself to prioritizing national needs and eliminating unjustified programs so that limited resources can flow to the Nation's most pressing requirements according to merit and need. Achieving these lofty goals will take a Secretary who can say no, as well as yes, and who can keep an unflinching eye on the interests of the country rather than on politics.

Mr. Slater, assured us that he understands the magnitude of the responsibilities awaiting the new Secretary, and is qualified and eager to take them on. Having questioned and examined this nominee, and given his track record of public service, the committee trusts and believes that is so. I urge my colleagues to confirm Rodney Slater, and we look forward to working with him to best serve the transportation needs of our Nation.

I ask for the yeas and nays on this vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There is a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

Mr. HOLLINGS. If my colleague would yield.

Mr. MCCAIN. I am happy to yield to the Senator.

Mr. HOLLINGS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to extend—

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, under the previous order, we were supposed to vote at 3 o'clock. That is my understanding.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. That was the agreement.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I yield back remaining time.

Mr. HOLLINGS. Mr. President, I yield back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time is yielded back. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Rodney E. Slater, of Arkansas, to be Secretary of Transportation? On this question the yeas and nays have been ordered and the clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. NICKLES. I announce that the Senator from Utah [Mr. BENNETT] and the Senator from South Carolina [Mr. THURMOND] are necessarily absent.

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

The result was announced—yeas 98, nays 0, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 6 Ex.]

YEAS—98

Abraham	Bingaman	Bumpers
Akaka	Bond	Burns
Allard	Boxer	Byrd
Ashcroft	Breaux	Campbell
Baucus	Brownback	Chafee
Biden	Bryan	Cleland

Coats	Harkin	Moseley-Braun
Cochran	Hatch	Moynihan
Collins	Helms	Murkowski
Conrad	Hollings	Murray
Coverdell	Hutchinson	Nickles
Craig	Hutchison	Reed
D'Amato	Inhofe	Reid
Daschle	Inouye	Robb
DeWine	Jeffords	Roberts
Dodd	Johnson	Rockefeller
Domenici	Kempthorne	Roth
Dorgan	Kennedy	Santorum
Durbin	Kerrey	Sarbanes
Enzi	Kerry	Sessions
Faircloth	Kohl	Shelby
Feingold	Kyl	Smith, Bob
Feinstein	Landrieu	Smith, Gordon
Ford	Lautenberg	H.
Frist	Leahy	Snowe
Glenn	Levin	Specter
Gorton	Lieberman	Stevens
Graham	Lott	Thomas
Gramm	Lugar	Thompson
Grams	Mack	Torricelli
Grassley	McCain	Warner
Gregg	McConnell	Wellstone
Hagel	Mikulski	Wyden

NOT VOTING—2

Bennett Thurmond

The nomination was confirmed.

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

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

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair notes that under the previous order, the President shall be notified of the confirmation of the nomination of Rodney Slater.

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, Rodney Earl Slater is the right choice to become the next U.S. Secretary of Transportation. He has earned the unanimous vote by which he was confirmed. He has taken a remarkable path from a childhood of poverty to being selected to head the \$39 billion Department of Transportation. His hard work and talents have proven invaluable to every effort he has undertaken.

Rodney was born in 1955 in the dirt-poor Mississippi Delta. His first taste of hard work came early, when as a boy he picked cotton and peaches. He was recruited to play football at Eastern Michigan University, rising to become co-captain of the team.

His performance in speech class so impressed his professor that he persuaded him to join the college's debate team. He went on to become a national finalist in debate competitions. The coach of his college debate team described him well: "I knew way back then that here was a very disciplined, goal-oriented young man who was driven by his own competitiveness. He wasn't competing against other students. He was competing against his own measure of success."

Rodney Slater went on to an outstanding career of public service. He served several years in the Arkansas State Attorney General's Office. After 4 years as an assistant to then-Arkansas Governor Bill Clinton, he directed government relations for Arkansas State University.

In 1987, he was appointed to the powerful Arkansas State Highway Commis-

sion, making him the first African-American to hold the job. Five years later, he was promoted to chair the commission.

As Federal Highway Administrator since 1993, Mr. Slater has managed a \$20 billion annual budget in an agency with 3,500 employees and offices in every State. He tackled the politically difficult task of putting together the National Highway System, a 160,000-mile network of roadways. Stitching together that system involved painstaking negotiations with 50 State governments, regional transportation agencies, and city governments. Despite these difficulties, he won praise from all sides for his candor, political skills, and ability to work within the system to get things done.

Rodney Slater's nomination has drawn wide and bipartisan support. As President Clinton put it, he "was recommended by more people from more places in more ways for this job than any person for any position I have ever seen." He has won praise from leaders from both parties and both Houses of Congress. Senator JOHN WARNER, who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Transportation Subcommittee, described him best as "an effective partner with Congress."

As a true Arkansas traveler, Rodney has demonstrated he understands rural transportation needs. He has certainly become a good friend of South Dakota. When we needed help, in good times and bad, we knew we could count on him. South Dakotans are deeply grateful for his assistance, which we will never forget.

The nomination of Rodney Slater validates a life of hard work. He has earned this nomination. From his roots in rural Arkansas, he worked his way through college and law school. Here in Washington, he has rebuilt and expanded our Nation's highways and linked isolated communities to jobs and opportunities. He has built bridges both of steel and of goodwill to bring people closer together. He is the right person to help us meet the many transportation challenges we face as we enter the 21st century.

I supported Rodney Slater's nomination with enthusiasm. He fully deserved the unanimous vote by which he was confirmed.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will return to legislative session.

Mr. LOTT addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the recess be delayed in order for Senator GRAHAM of Florida and Senator SESSIONS of Alabama and Senator GRAMS of Minnesota