

TRANSPORTATION  
APPROPRIATIONS

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, in every part of our country, Americans are frustrated by the transportation problems we face every day.

We sit in traffic on overcrowded roads.

We wait through delays in congested airports.

We have rural areas trapped in the past—without the roads and infrastructure they need to survive.

We have many Americans who rely on a Coast Guard that doesn't have the resources to fully protect us.

We have many families who live near oil and gas pipelines and who want us to ensure their safety.

Our transportation problems frustrate us as individuals, and they frustrate our Nation's economy—slowing down our productivity and putting the brakes on our progress. It is time to help Americans on our highways, railroads, airways, and waterways, and we can, by passing the Transportation appropriations bill.

For months, Senator SHELBY and I have worked in a bipartisan way—with almost every Member of the Senate—to meet the transportation needs in all 50 States.

You told us your priorities—and we found a way to accommodate them. We have come up with a balanced, bipartisan bill that will make our highways safer, our roads less crowded, and our country more productive. And now is our chance to put this progress to work for the people we represent.

Our bill has broad support from both parties. It passed the subcommittee and the full committee unanimously. Now it is before the full Senate—ready for a vote—ready to go to work to help Americans who are fed up with traffic congestion and airport delays.

Today, I hope the Senate will again vote to invoke cloture so we can begin working on the many solutions across the country that will improve our lives, our travel, and our productivity.

This vote is about two things: fixing the transportation problems we face; and ensuring the safety of our transportation infrastructure.

If you vote for cloture, you are voting to give your communities the resources they need to escape from crippling traffic and overcrowded roads.

If you vote for cloture, you are saying that our highways must be safe—that trucks coming from Mexico must meet our safety standards—if they are going to share our roads.

But if you vote against cloture, you are telling the people in your State that they will have to keep waiting in traffic and keep wasting time in congestion.

And if you vote against cloture, you are voting against the safety standards in this bill. A “no” vote would open our borders to trucks that we know are

unsafe—without the inspections and safety standards we deserve. This is not about partisanship or protectionism. It is about productivity and public safety.

I want to highlight how this bill will improve highway travel, airline safety, pipeline safety, and Coast Guard protection. First and foremost, this bill will address the chronic traffic problems facing our communities.

In fact, under this bill, every State will receive more highway construction funding than they would under either the President's request or the levels assumed in TEA-21. Our bill improves America's highways. Let's vote for cloture so we can begin sending that help to your State.

Second, this bill will improve air transportation. It will make air travel more safe by providing funding to hire 221 more FAA inspectors. Let's vote for cloture so we can begin putting those new inspectors on the job for our safety.

Third, our bill boosts funding for the Office of Pipeline Safety by more than \$11 million above current levels. Let's vote for cloture so we can begin making America's pipelines safer before another tragedy claims more innocent lives.

Fourth, this bill will give the Coast Guard the funding it needs to protect us and our environment. Let's vote for cloture so we can begin making our waterways safer.

These examples show how this bill will help address the transportation problems we face. This vote is also about making sure our highways are safe—so I would like to turn to the issue of Mexican trucks. And I want to clear up a few things.

Some Members have suggested that Senator SHELBY and I have refused to negotiate on this bill. That is just not the case. As I have said several times here on the floor, we are here, we are ready, and we are listening. And we have also had extensive meetings bringing both sides together.

Last week, our staffs met several nights until well after midnight. One day our staffs met from 2 o'clock in the afternoon until 3 a.m. in the morning. We have worked with all sides to move this bill forward. But I want to point something else out to those who say we must compromise, compromise, compromise.

The Murray-Shelby bill itself is a compromise. It is a balanced, moderate compromise between the extreme positions taken by the administration and the House of Representatives. On one hand, we have the administration—which took a hands-off approach to let all Mexican trucks across our border—and then inspect them later—up to a year and half later.

Even though we know these trucks are much less safe than American or Canadian trucks, the administration

thinks it is fine for us to share the road with them without any assurance of their safety. At the other extreme, was the “strict protectionist” position of the House of Representatives. It said that no Mexican trucks can cross the border, and that not one penny could be spent to inspect them.

Those are two extreme positions. The administration said; Let all the trucks in without ensuring their safety. The House of Representatives said; Don't let any trucks in because they are not safe.

Senator SHELBY and I worked hard, and we found a balanced, bipartisan, commonsense compromise. We listened to the safety experts, to the Department of Transportation's inspector general, to the GAO and to the industry. And we came up with a compromise that will allow Mexican trucks onto our highways and will ensure that those trucks and their drivers are safe.

With this balanced bill, free trade and highway safety can move forward side-by-side. This bill doesn't punish Mexico—and that is not our intention. Mexico is an important neighbor, ally, and friend. Mexican drivers are working hard to put food on their family's tables. We want them to be safe—both for their families and for ours.

NAFTA was passed to strengthen our partnerships, and to raise the standards of living of all three countries. We are continuing to move toward that goal, and the bipartisan Murray-Shelby compromise will help us get there. Because right now, Mexican trucks are not as safe as they should be.

According to the Department of Transportation inspector general, Mexican trucks are significantly less safe than American trucks. Last year, nearly two in five Mexican trucks failed their safety inspections. That compares with one in four American trucks and only one in seven Canadian trucks. Even today, Mexican trucks have been routinely violating the current restrictions that limit their travel to the 20-mile commercial zone.

We have a responsibility to insure the safety of America's highways. The Murray-Shelby compromise allows us to promote safety without violating NAFTA. During this debate we have heard some Senators and White House aides say that they think ensuring the safety of Mexican trucks would violate NAFTA.

I appreciate their opinions. But with all due respect, there is only one authority, only one official body, that decides what violates NAFTA and what doesn't. It's the arbitral panel established under the NAFTA treaty itself. That official panel said:

The United States may not be required to treat applications from Mexican trucking firms in exactly the same manner as applications from United States or Canadian firms . . .

U.S. authorities are responsible for the safe operations of trucks within U.S. territory, whether ownership is United States, Canadian, or Mexican.

It is that simple. We can ensure the safety of Mexican trucks and comply with NAFTA—and this bill shows us how with commonsense safety measures.

Under our bill, when you are driving on the highway behind a Mexican truck, you can feel safe. The administration's plan is far too weak. Under the administration's plan, trucking companies would mail in a form saying that they are safe and begin driving on our highways.

No inspections for up to a year and a half. The administration is telling American families that the safety check is in the mail. I don't know about you, but I wouldn't bet my family's safety on it. I want an actual inspector looking at that truck, checking that driver's record, making sure that truck won't threaten me or my family.

The White House says: Take the trucking company at its word that its trucks and drivers are safe. Senator SHELBY and I say: Trust an American safety inspector to make sure that truck and driver will be safe on our roads. This is a solid compromise. It will allow robust trade while ensuring the safety of our highways. The people of America need help in the transportation challenges they face every day on crowded roads.

This bill provides real help and funds the projects that members have been asking for. Some Senators would hold every transportation project in the country hostage until they have weakened the safety standards in the Murray-Shelby compromise. That is the wrong thing to do.

Let's keep the safety standards in place so that when you're driving down the highway next to a truck with Mexican license plates you will know that truck is safe. Let's vote for safety by voting for cloture on this bill.

So in closing, this vote is about two things: Helping Americans who are frustrated every day by transportation problems and ensuring the safety of our transportation infrastructure.

Voting for cloture means we can begin making our roads less crowded, our airports less congested, our waterways safer, our railways better, and our highways safer.

Those who vote for cloture are voting to begin making progress across the country and to ensure the safety of our highways.

Those who vote against cloture are voting to keep our roads and airports crowded and to expose Americans to new dangers on our highways.

The choice is simple, and I urge my colleagues to vote for cloture so we can begin putting this good, balanced bill to work for the people we represent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nevada.

Mr. REID. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MILLER). The clerk will call the roll.

The 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.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2002—Resumed

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the hour of 11 o'clock having arrived, the motion to proceed to the motion to reconsider and the motion to reconsider the failed cloture vote on H.R. 2299 are agreed to.

The clerk will report the motion to invoke cloture.

The assistant legislative 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 the debate on H.R. 2299, the Transportation Appropriations Act:

Pat Murray, Ron Wyden, Pat Leahy, Harry Reid, Hillary Rodham Clinton, Charles Schumer, Jack Reed, Robert C. Byrd, Jim Jeffords, Daniel K. Akaka, Bob Graham, Paul Sarbanes, Carl Levin, John D. Rockefeller IV, Thomas R. Carper, Barbara Mikulski, and Tom Daschle.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on H.R. 2299, an act making appropriations for the Department of Transportation and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2002, and for other purposes, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are required under the rule. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 100, nays 0, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 262 Leg.]

YEAS—100

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|-----------|------------|------------|
| Akaka     | Collins    | Hagel      |
| Allard    | Conrad     | Harkin     |
| Allen     | Corzine    | Hatch      |
| Baucus    | Craig      | Helms      |
| Bayh      | Crapo      | Hollings   |
| Bennett   | Daschle    | Hutchinson |
| Biden     | Dayton     | Hutchison  |
| Bingaman  | DeWine     | Inhofe     |
| Bond      | Dodd       | Inouye     |
| Boxer     | Domenici   | Jeffords   |
| Breaux    | Dorgan     | Johnson    |
| Brownback | Durbin     | Kennedy    |
| Bunning   | Edwards    | Kerry      |
| Burns     | Ensign     | Kohl       |
| Byrd      | Enzi       | Kyl        |
| Campbell  | Feingold   | Landrieu   |
| Cantwell  | Feinstein  | Leahy      |
| Carnahan  | Fitzgerald | Levin      |
| Carper    | Frist      | Lieberman  |
| Chafee    | Graham     | Lincoln    |
| Cleland   | Gramm      | Lott       |
| Clinton   | Grassley   | Lugar      |
| Cochran   | Gregg      | McCain     |

- |             |             |            |
|-------------|-------------|------------|
| McConnell   | Rockefeller | Stevens    |
| Mikulski    | Santorum    | Thomas     |
| Miller      | Sarbanes    | Thompson   |
| Murkowski   | Schumer     | Thurmond   |
| Murray      | Sessions    | Torricelli |
| Nelson (FL) | Shelby      | Voinovich  |
| Nelson (NE) | Smith (NH)  | Warner     |
| Nickles     | Smith (OR)  | Wellstone  |
| Reed        | Snowe       | Wyden      |
| Reid        | Specter     |            |
| Roberts     | Stabenow    |            |

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 100, the nays are 0. Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn having voted in the affirmative, the motion is agreed to.

Who seeks recognition?

The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, the Senate has now, by a vote of 100–0, moved forward to a time where we can finally go to final passage on the Transportation appropriations bill. I hope that occurs sooner rather than later. All of us have constituents who are waiting in traffic for us to make sure we do the right thing for the infrastructure of this country.

As I have said before, Senator SHELBY and I have worked very hard together. I commend him and his staff, and our staff, for the many hours they have worked to get to the point where we have a bill that represents the important needs of our country—whether it is our airports, our waterways, our highways, our infrastructure. I think we have done a good job with that.

There have been a lot of remarks over the last several weeks regarding the Mexico truck provision. I want to submit for the RECORD a letter from members of the Hispanic caucus in the House.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have the letter printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the letter was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

WASHINGTON, DC,  
July 31, 2001.

Hon. PATTY MURRAY,  
Hon. RICHARD C. SHELBY,  
*Senate Appropriations Committee, Subcommittee on Transportation, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Washington, DC.*

DEAR SENATORS MURRAY AND SHELBY: We are writing to express our disbelief over comments we have read implying that the truck safety measures that you have included in the Transportation Appropriations Bill for Fiscal Year 2002 are somehow “anti-Hispanic” or “anti-Mexican.” As you know, when the Transportation Appropriations Bill passed the House, an amendment was adopted that prohibited any Mexican trucks from being granted authority to operate in the United States during Fiscal Year 2002. In a seemingly less extreme approach, the Senate version of the bill, as drafted by your subcommittee, includes several provisions intended to address obvious safety concerns regarding Mexican trucks that have been voiced by impartial and knowledgeable observers such as the U.S. Department of Transportation Inspector General.

The issue of safety on our highways is not an “Hispanic issue.” All Americans are equally at risk from unsafe conditions on our