

I will make that motion in just a moment, but let me, first, just explain what this is and why I am doing it.

Next week, President Trump has announced plans to impose 25-percent tariffs on products coming into the United States from Mexico and Canada, our No. 1 and No. 2 trading partners.

These tariffs will be disastrous for our economy and our national security. These tariffs will cost the average American household about \$1,200 a year. They will raise costs for avocados, appliances, diesel fuel, dog toys, car parts, Christmas tree lights, tomatoes, and tequila. I could go on.

Our economies are so closely integrated—the United States, Canada, and Mexico—that it will increase the cost of a GM pickup truck about \$10,000.

Even if these tariffs, at the last minute, are delayed, businesses are hurt by the uncertainty, which continues to increase costs.

President Trump plans to follow those tariffs with reciprocal tariffs on the EU, which includes many of our critical NATO allies and closest partners.

Imposing tariffs on our allies and partners diminishes our standing in the world and makes our neighbors less likely to help us in the future.

It is no surprise that Americans think this is a terrible idea. Barely a quarter of Americans think imposing tariffs on Canada is a good idea. More than double that disapprove.

President Trump has already declared an economic emergency to justify imposing these tariffs on Mexico and Canada, but my bill with Senator KAINE would prevent him from abusing long-established national security authorities to follow through on further tariff threats against our allies and FTA partners.

The U.S. Constitution in the Commerce Clause, article I, section 8, gives Congress jurisdiction over trade policy. It is time that we take ownership back of controlling the ability to impose tariffs willy-nilly on our trusted partners and allies by passing this bill and reining in President Trump's costly and damaging ideas.

So I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Finance be discharged from further consideration of S. 348 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration; that the bill be considered read a third time and passed; and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, reserving the right to object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Idaho.

Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, I rise to discuss some issues with Senator COONS' request for unanimous consent for the Senate to pass S. 348, the STABLE Trade Policy Act.

Senator COONS is a good friend and a great ally, and, reluctantly, I stand to

oppose this motion on this particular procedure.

First, Senator COONS and I agree about much on trade policy, including the need for the United States to have more high-standard free-trade agreements, like the United States-Mexico-Canada trade agreement, or USMCA. We should ensure that the commitments in those agreements are respected.

The last administration not only refused to negotiate new trade agreements but undermined U.S. rights under them when it waived our intellectual property rights under the WTO TRIPS Agreement and without informing Congress, attempting to remove the rights of American investors under the USMCA.

Second, I also agree that we should not undertake tariff actions lightly on our allies or free-trade agreement partners.

We should, however, take care before we say that all options are completely off the table. In fact, all of our free-trade agreements provide exceptions for when parties can remove economic benefits, including on national security grounds.

I don't recall anyone suggesting that the Biden administration could not impose sanctions on Nicaragua last year because it was a CAFTA party. Instead, we recognized that legitimate national security grounds, including Nicaragua's human rights abuses, warranted the economic pressure.

Third, it was only yesterday that we confirmed Jamieson Greer as the U.S. Trade Representative to serve as the principal adviser on trade issues. He told the Finance Committee that he wants to work closely with Congress.

There are a lot of good things we can do together. For instance, we can negotiate new agreements and reinvigorate congressional executive partnerships on trade.

The STABLE Trade Policy Act is, accordingly, too blunt of an instrument when nuance is called for, including the option of tariffs in some instances.

With that, I object to Senator COONS' request.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BUDD). The objection is heard.

The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, I understand that Senator CRAPO, the chairman of the Finance Committee, a supporter of President Trump, has blocked this bill today. I hope to find ways to work with him on improving market access and on elevating the quality and the capabilities of U.S. trade engagement with our partners. But I really don't understand why President Trump seems so intent on harming one of his signature accomplishments, the USMCA.

I am disappointed because Congress gave the President authority to impose tariffs in the event of a national security crisis. Congress did not grant this power to pursue petty grudges against trusted neighbors.

Honestly, how can anyone be angry with Canadians? They are the nicest people in the world. Yet here they are, working with us, pleading with us to not impose ruinous tariffs that would harm their economy and ours.

I will briefly, then, just make, again, a few simple points. I am disappointed that President Trump isn't doing more to reduce costs. He was elected, in no small part, because of high inflation and promised it would come down on day one.

These tariffs, if imposed, will make inflation worse and hit the lowest income Americans the hardest. It will impact American business, American families, and American communities.

So I hope that working together with my friends and colleagues here in the Senate, we can find ways to lower costs on pharmaceuticals and automobiles and microchips. But imposing reciprocal tariffs on trusted friends and allies and sparking tariff wars in our region and around the world is not the way to do that.

Two-thirds of Americans already think that President Trump isn't doing enough to lower costs. Blocking this bill will only accelerate that if President Trump continues to act unwisely and bully and threaten our closest and most trusted partners.

We must find a better way forward together.

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

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

UKRAINE

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize a very painful milestone. This week marks the third anniversary of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine.

Over the past 3 years, the world has witnessed the incredible bravery and resolve of the Ukrainian people as they have stood up to Russia's unspeakable brutality and destruction.

We have seen—and, indeed, the United States should take great pride in having led—an impressive coalition of nations coming together to support Ukraine in this fight to preserve its democracy.

At the same time, an alarming convergence of authoritarian states—Russia, China, Iran, Belarus, and North Korea—have banded together to enable Russia's illegal war of choice.

As we mark this milestone, we are faced with another frightening set of developments. President Trump has set his sights on negotiations with Vladimir Putin to win the war. But before reaching the negotiating table, Mr. Trump has appeared so eager to reach

a deal that he has been willing to acquiesce to Russian demands for essentially nothing in return. Even worse, he has deliberately excluded Ukraine and Europe from the discussion.

We have seen this playbook before, most recently in Afghanistan. In 2020, President Trump, eager to achieve a quick deal, negotiated directly with the Taliban and excluded the Afghan Government from the negotiating table. He capitulated to Taliban demands, including the release of over 5,000 Taliban fighters, and blindly agreed to a 1-year withdrawal timeline, even as evidence mounted that the Taliban was not holding up the meager demands in the agreement. I fear President Trump has not learned any new negotiating skills in the 5 years since.

The tenets of his approach to Ukraine and Europe appear to be the same: Exclude and criticize American allies, capitulate to our enemies, and withdraw support without any assurance of success.

Earlier this month, Munich was the scene of another capitulation, when Vice President Vance and Defense Secretary Hegseth kicked off Trump's giveaway campaign to President Putin.

The historical irony is unmistakable, since Munich is a place that has inauspiciously become a shorthand for the "appeasement" of tyrants.

In 1932, British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain left his meeting with Adolf Hitler in Munich. And after surrendering Czechoslovakia in exchange for a peace pledge, when he returned to England, Chamberlain waved about a piece of paper with Hitler's promise and declared, "Peace in our time." In reality, it was the beginning of the capitulation that would lead inextricably to the greatest war in history.

Hopefully, this administration's rush to appease Vladimir Putin will not lead to the carnage like that of World War II. But it well may cost Ukraine its sovereignty and independence while also undermining the international order—the very same order that America and her allies created from the ashes of World War II.

Let's review the bidding so far. To begin, Defense Secretary Hegseth's speech in Brussels at the Ukraine Defense Contact Group set a shameful tone for the American delegation in Europe.

Ukraine Defense Contact Group, or UDCG, was created by the United States under the Biden administration. It has organized and led the international efforts to support Ukraine, which has enabled Ukrainians to significantly repel the Russian invasion and continue the fight to protect their homeland.

The United States has led this effort throughout the war. I regret that Secretary Hegseth's first appearance marked the retreat of our role as leader of the UDCG.

In his remarks, he said:

[W]e must start by recognizing that returning to Ukraine's . . . 2014 borders is an unrealistic objective.

He further stated:

[T]he United States does not believe that NATO membership for Ukraine is a realistic outcome of a negotiated settlement.

In essence, Secretary Hegseth conceded away our most important leverage against Russia. His statements, echoed by President Trump and Vice President VANCE, have already badly weakened and undermined our negotiating position by gifting the Russians with several unilateral concessions. All of these forfeits were made without any apparent consultation with the Ukraine or our NATO allies.

Again, the shortsightedness of President Trump's, Hegseth's, and VANCE's statements are alarming.

NATO has been the bulwark against Russian aggression in Europe since 1949. The alliance has more than doubled its membership since its founding. Central to the enlargement is NATO's open-door policy, enshrined in article 10 of the North Atlantic Treaty, which affirms a core NATO tenet that any European nation that demonstrates a willingness to contribute to our collective security and the values and obligation of the NATO alliance may seek membership.

Vladimir Putin does not get to dictate who may or may not become a member of the NATO alliance, just as his Soviet predecessors could not stop the membership prospects of Poland or Hungary or Germany. To preemptively surrender admission to NATO is national security malpractice and only benefits Vladimir Putin.

Finally, Secretary Hegseth declared that Europe and NATO are no longer priorities of the Trump administration.

In his words:

We're . . . here today to directly and unambiguously express that stark strategic realities prevent the United States . . . from being primarily focused on the security of Europe.

Further:

The United States faces consequential threats to our homeland. We must—and we are—focusing on security of our own borders.

I agree that the security of America's homeland is our No. 1 national security mission, but I reject Secretary Hegseth's myopic view that the American national security establishment is so fragile and so constrained that it must shift the entirety of its focus to the border security mission, at the expense of other national security imperatives.

Moreover, border protection is a civilian law enforcement mission. Deploying large numbers of military forces to support the Border Patrol is a gross misallocation of forces and raises numerous legal issues.

The administration's shameful claims have been a shock to Ukraine, NATO, Europe, and the democratic world at large. They have provided great comfort to Putin and autocrats everywhere.

In addition to Secretary Hegseth's speech, Vice President VANCE took the stage in Munich and further eroded our

status in the world. He castigated European allies for his perceived grievances with their domestic politics and alleged movements away from "democratic values," while at the same time remaining silent on the brutal dictators in Russia and Belarus who have never had a free or fair election in the course of their tenure.

President Trump gave his tip of the hat to autocracy last week when he attempted to revise history by alleging that Ukraine, not Russia, started the war and that President Zelenskyy was the "dictator" in this situation. These categorically false statements are either a product of deliberate deceit or historical delusion.

President Trump even directed the Acting U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations to vote against a U.N. resolution condemning Russia's war against Ukraine. The United States instead voted in a bloc with Russia, Iran, North Korea, and other authoritarian nations, which is a stunning reversal of decades of American foreign policy.

This toxic revisionist history has now pervaded his political nominees as well. Throughout the week, his political appointees have contorted themselves in order to avoid acknowledging the fact that Russia was responsible for starting the war in Ukraine. This is something straight out of North Korea, where "facts" are the sole purview of the Dear Leader.

We must also note the deafening silence from many of my Republican colleagues. Many Republicans claimed for years to be unapologetic supporters of Ukraine who were outraged by the perception that President Biden was not sending enough U.S. support to Ukraine. But now they appear to be standing by silently as facts are erased, as the pipeline of aid to Ukraine peters to a halt, as the Trump administration disbands Federal task forces established to seize the assets of Russian oligarchs and guard against foreign election interference and disinformation campaigns.

Silence is complicity. We cannot allow this to continue. If we are going down the path of negotiation with Russia, we must act to strengthen our hand in these negotiations.

Ironically, Russia is in a very weak negotiating position. Let us briefly review Putin's situation.

Over the course of 3 years, Ukraine has inflicted a staggering cost on Russia. Putin has lost 200,000 soldiers, and many hundreds of thousands more were wounded. He has lost hundreds of billions of dollars of military equipment and weapons. Indeed, Russia's weapons and logistical stocks are perilously diminished. Their closest ally in the war—Iran—is weaker than it has been in decades due to Israeli and U.S. actions. North Korean soldiers, sent to reinforce flagging Russian forces, are suffering severe casualty rates. Russia has been ousted from Syria, and its Wagner mercenaries in Africa are struggling to reorganize. The Russian economy is afloat but stagnant.

Any shrewd negotiator should recognize that Russia is on the ropes. Now is not the time to appease Putin. This is a time to exert maximum pressure to bring him to the negotiating table hat in hand.

There are three things we must do now.

First, we must continue to pressure Russia economically. This means strengthening existing sanctions, identifying secondary sanctions, and bolstering sanctions enforcement and anti-evasion efforts. At the top of the effort to control the evasion of sanctions, we should be working with allies to combat the illicit oil trade, including efforts to go on the offensive against the so-called ghost fleet of aging tankers Russia employs to facilitate the export of oil and other sanctioned goods.

Second, we must work with our European partners to impound and leverage Russia's frozen assets.

Finally, we must ensure in both word and deed that Ukraine has our support and commitment to working with them to establish a just and lasting peace.

However, instead of taking action to strengthen the negotiating hand on any of these fronts, the administration has shifted focus to the signing of a deal to exploit Ukraine's natural resources. Much remains to be seen about the shape of this agreement, but we do know it will take years, if not decades, to see substantial returns.

A large number of Ukraine's rare earth deposits are actually located in Ukrainian territory that is currently contested or occupied by Russia. I am not sure how one is to square this agreement with Secretary Hegseth's comments about the forfeiture of Ukraine's sovereign territory.

Furthermore, the deal includes no security guarantees from the United States, which the Ukrainians have—rightly, I believe—insisted upon. Security guarantees are essential to assure Ukraine that the United States is not simply interested in an enrichment scheme but is committed to the pursuit of a just and lasting peace.

Indeed, a just and lasting peace must be the final outcome. That is a United States national security imperative, one that has—at least until recently—enjoyed robust and vocal bipartisan support.

We support Ukraine because we know that the war in Ukraine is not just a regional war; it is the most visible demonstration of the larger existential threat Russia poses to our national security.

We support Ukraine to ensure that Vladimir Putin cannot achieve his goals, which are counter to our own national interests. We must be clear-eyed about this. If Putin succeeds in Ukraine, it will be the first piece in his long-stated promise to recreate the Soviet empire. If that happens, if we fail to learn from history and to see brutal and craven authoritarians for what they are and the threat they represent,

we may again find America's sons and daughters sent overseas to fight on foreign shores.

I urge my Republican colleagues and my Democratic colleagues—all my colleagues—to speak up and stand with Ukraine as they have done for so many years. Let us continue.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I rise today with my colleagues in strong opposition to the firings of scientists, medical researchers, and more at the Department of Health and Human Services.

HHS is in charge of everything from preventing disease outbreaks to making sure that our kids are healthy to ensuring that seniors can live with dignity.

It directly touches more lives than any other Cabinet Agency. That is why the administration's mass firings of thousands of HHS employees are deeply troubling.

When a new CEO comes in and wants to see a new direction for a company, they look at it, they look at all the divisions, they figure out their direction. They maybe cut a division; they maybe make changes to it. They look at the merits of certain employees; they move some employees to different divisions. And they figure out, thoughtfully, what is the right way and what is the best way for their company.

This is the entire government, but that is not what is happening here. They are firing people across the board, without regard to merit, without regard for function. They are firing some of the newest employees who are eager and excited to have their jobs. They are firing some people who are simply up for promotion which puts them in a probationary status.

They are not looking at what these people are doing or the value they bring to the workforce and to the American people. They are just doing it and getting on TV with a chain saw.

These are people who went into public service for a reason. They are people, in the case of Health and Human Services, who keep us healthy and save lives, who work every day to keep America at the forefront of medical breakthroughs and innovation.

It has been our secret sauce. It has given the world the most incredible, credible, lifesaving drugs and medical devices—like the pacemaker in my State.

That didn't just come out of one company. That came out of a lot of ideas, and that came out of a lot of universities, and that came out of people doing clinical trials, and that came out of a devotion by our country to moving forward. That is how we have gotten these lifesaving cures.

That is how we mapped the human genome, so that we are now starting to

offer personalized medicine, drugs that fit people, things that work, things that cure diseases we never thought were possible to cure. That is how our economy has been so strengthened, and we have led across the world.

You know, I have worked for years to cut redtape, and I know there is more to do. I know there is more we can do to make our government effective. But we can do that together and take the ideas from the administration. We can work on it in the next budget. We can make some changes. I support permitting reform—all kinds of things that we could do.

But these mass firings in the area of medical research? This makes no sense.

The Department of Health and Human Services is also tasked with implementing Medicare drug price negotiation, which I fought for years to pass into law, along with my colleague Senator WELCH from Vermont, when he was in the House, and Senator SANDERS here in the Senate.

This is expected—we finally passed it. It was part of the Inflation Reduction Act, and it actually says: Hey, this sweetheart deal that pharma had with Medicare, in which they can't negotiate at all and that the prices are locked in and so our country—people are paying twice as much as they do in places like Canada, for the drug. Yet it is our taxpayers that put in the money for the research or the VA, which works so well for our veterans. They are able to negotiate and get better prices, but not 50 million seniors?

So what did we do? We finally ended the sweetheart deal, and we passed a law. I would have been more aggressive about how many drugs we could negotiate because I understand they start with a group of drugs, and pretty soon that is going to help people who aren't seniors, as we did with the insulin cap. That insulin cap, at 35 bucks a month, was only for seniors, but Merck and other companies offered it to nonseniors, as well, because we got it going with the biggest prescription drug buying group in the country, and that would be our seniors.

So this Medicare negotiation has ramifications for everyone in this country. However, even though we only did 10 drugs at first, the Biden administration picked blockbuster drugs—big drugs that so many people take, like Januvia and Jardiance and Xarelto and Eliquis. Combined, in 1 year—just 1 year, when this starts next year; no one has refuted these statistics—9 million seniors will save \$1.5 billion in out-of-pocket costs in the first year alone and save taxpayers over \$100 billion in the next decade. That is just 10 drugs.

They have now come up with 15 more drugs, including Ozempic and those weight-loss drugs, and they have passed that torch now—or the voters have—onto the next administration. So now, it is on them to negotiate these 15 and then pick 15 more and 15 more. Imagine how much money we can save, not just for the seniors—that is obvious—but also for the taxpayers because