

there is also bipartisan support for other bills reported by the Finance Committee.

Now, I know we have heard some concern that these bills might get left behind. I don't think that was anybody's intent. I expect to have a robust amendment process that will allow trade-related amendments to be offered and considered, including on the subject matters that the committee dealt with. The underlying substitute will be a compromise between the two parties, marrying TAA and TPA.

But let me repeat so there is no misunderstanding: The measure before us will be open for amendment, and I expect that other trade policies considered by the committee—and possibly even more—will be debated on the floor. I also expect that Chairman HATCH and Senator WYDEN will be working hard to get as much done as they can on all of these proposals.

I know that Chairman HATCH wants to find a path forward on all of these bills. I know that Senator WYDEN and Chairman RYAN spent a lot of time working through TAA, and, despite the objections of many on our side, it is likely to be included in any trade bill that passes the Senate.

I am confident that an enduring agreement can be found if the Senate is allowed to work its will and debate openly. That is what we intend to have happen on this bill. So I repeat: All we are voting on today is whether to have that debate at all.

If there are Senators with concerns about particular details of the trade agenda before us, that is all the more reason to vote to debate it. Let's have these conversations in an open and transparent way. Let's give the American people a full-throated debate on an important issue.

But we can't debate any of the provisions Senators want to consider if they vote to filibuster even getting on the bill. So I am calling on colleagues to prove they are serious—prove they are serious about wanting to pass this legislation—rather than simply looking for new and creative ways to defeat it. Voting to proceed is the way we have an opportunity to prove we want to pass trade promotion authority.

All the good committee work I mentioned demonstrates a real hunger to process bipartisan trade legislation. So let's vote to build on that today. Let's vote to open debate on a 21st century American trade agenda. Let's not slam the door on even the opportunity of having that debate.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The minority leader is recognized.

WASHINGTON, DC, NFL TEAM NAME CHANGE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, yesterday the National Football League punished

one of its most recognizable players for allegedly having tampered with game balls. I find it stunning that the National Football League is more concerned about how much air is in a football than with a racist franchise name that denigrates Native Americans across the country. The Redskins name is a racist name. So I wish the commissioner would act as swiftly and decisively in changing the name of the Washington, DC, team as he did about not enough air in a football.

TRADE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, we know that later today the Senate will vote on whether to move forward with consideration of trade legislation. What we do not know, other than what the leader just said, is what is going to be in the matter before us. It seems to me he said that there will be TPA and TAA in the bill, and that dealing with Africa and these other provisions dealing with customs won't be in the bill. That is unfortunate.

In April, the Senate Finance Committee reported four bills out of the committee. Each of these four bills addressed different trade issues. Several of these bills contain amendments that the Senate spent months and years working to pass.

As I stand here today, Senate Democrats still don't know for sure the procedure of the Republican leader. And I would say to my friend the Republican leader, and to everyone who hears me say this, that using the logic of the Republican leader, he should move to these four bills. If he wants a robust amendment process, which he talks about all the time, why doesn't he put this legislation before this body and we will have a robust amendment process.

The ranking member of the Finance Committee is here. He is an experienced legislator and he knows—he was here before the Republicans put skids on doing any legislation for 4 years. He knows what the process was before then. He knows what the process is today, and he knows that the reason a few things are being accomplished this work period—and I mean a few—is because we have cooperated with Republicans. We still want to do that.

But if the Republican leader is concerned about a robust amendment process, then, put everything the committee reported out. That is why we have been led by the good senior Senator from Oregon the way we have been.

I have been very clear. I am not a fan of fast track. But it is important to remember that the Senate's ongoing debate about trade is not limited to legislation granting President Obama fast-track trade authority.

One of the bills reported out of the committee provides worker assistance for American workers who lose their jobs because of trade—important. Trade adjustment helps American workers to be trained, to look for new

jobs, and to reenter the workplace. It is a program that has worked well.

The second bill helps developing countries export their products to the United States.

The third bill started out as a customs bill and now includes bipartisan provisions fighting currency manipulation and includes provisions on the importation of goods made with forced labor. It also ensures that American manufacturers can enforce trade laws against foreign companies that refuse to play by the rules.

Simply put, these three other bills include many provisions to make sure that trade is fair for American workers and the American economy.

My views on trade—I repeat—are well known. I don't support these trade provisions. But if the Senate is going to talk about trade, we must consider its impact on the American workers and the middle class, and that is what the customs provision does. That is why I support combining these four bills into one piece of legislation—so no American will be left behind by the Senate Republicans.

It is essential that if we move to fast-track, we consider these other bills as part of the process. In past years, Democrats and Republicans joined together to pass other important trade legislation with fast-track. For example, in 2002, when that passed, Congress adopted in that trade adjustment assistance, customs and trade enforcement and an extension of our preference programs. If we did it in 2002, why can't we do it today?

My friend the majority leader talks about the motion to proceed as a way to move forward. There is also a way to move forward that would be less disruptive, and it would work a lot better; that is, have the majority leader put all these four bills together and then begin—his words—a "robust amendment process."

The absence of assurance that these four bills are together is a signal that some will be left behind, and the people left behind, of course, are the American middle class. I urge the majority leader to take the necessary steps to merge these four bills reported out of the Finance Committee into one piece of legislation; otherwise, we risk hurting every American whom we talk about protecting so much here; namely, the middle class.

Again, logically, if you use the statements of the Republican leader, we should put all four of them together. We would move forward on this legislation. We could have a process—again, using his words, a "robust amendment process." Last time those words came out—"robust amendment process"—we had two amendments. That was the Iran bill, two amendments. That is robust? That is not very robust, in my estimation.

I wish my friend the ranking member of the Finance Committee the very best in this legislation. It is a huge responsibility for his caucus. We, at this

stage, support these four bills being moved forward at the same time and then the process can begin of legislating. If we do not—if he does not do that, then it is going to be very difficult to get to the guts of the bills that are reported out of committee.

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business until 12:30 p.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each, with the time equally divided in the usual form.

The Senator from Oregon.

TRADE

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I listened carefully to the remarks of the Senate majority leader, and I believe the majority leader's statement provides potential—potential—to find the bipartisan common ground on trade that we found in the Senate Finance Committee. In the Senate Finance Committee, we passed the Bipartisan Congressional Trade Priorities and Accountability Act of 2015 by a 20-to-6 vote and the Trade Adjustment Assistance Act of 2015 by a 17-to-9 vote. We passed a robust trade enforcement measure and package of trade preferences by voice vote.

Respectfully, I hope that the majority leader would take this morning to work with those on my side of the aisle who are supportive of trade to find a similar bipartisan approach to ensure that all four of the measures I have described are actually enacted.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

THE MIDDLE CLASS

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I appreciate the leadership of Senator WYDEN on this, because if you leave out certain bills that help workers, then what you are left with, essentially, is a package that ignores their needs.

I do want to say that I hope we will not proceed to this debate on this free-trade agreement. I stand here as someone who comes from California, where I had voted for half of the trade agreements and I voted against half. I think I am a fair voice for what we should be doing.

If there is one unifying principle about the economics of today, it is this: the middle class is having a very hard time in America today, perhaps the worst time in modern history.

A new University of California study released last week makes it clear how our middle class is being hollowed out. In my State, we have a dynamic workforce. We have dynamic entrepreneurs. We are doing very well. But this study found that the lowest paid 20 percent of California workers have seen their real wages decline by 12 percent since 1979.

Think about that. This is a great country. We always say we have to be optimistic about tomorrow. You do everything right, you play by the rules, and your income for your family, in real terms, goes down by 12 percent. There is something wrong with this. I think everyone will say they want to do more for the middle class, and there is a straightforward agenda we could turn to, to do just that. But instead what do we turn to: a trade agreement that threatens the middle class—that threatens the middle class. What should we be doing here? Not confabbing in a corner over there about how to push a trade bill on this floor that doesn't help working America, we should pass a highway bill. The highway bill is critical—good-paying jobs, businesses that thrive in all of our communities. More than 60,000 of our bridges are structurally deficient, more than 50 percent of our roads are not in good condition. But, oh, no, even though the highway bill expires—we have no more authority to expend money out of that fund come the end of May—they are bringing forward a trade bill that is a threat to the middle class.

Why don't we increase the minimum wage? The minimum wage needs to be raised. Oh, no, they do not want to do that. They have not done it in years. The States are doing it. Oh, no, let's keep people working full time in poverty. So instead of confabbing over there on how to push a trade bill onto this floor, we ought to be raising the minimum wage.

What else should we be doing? We should make college more affordable. We have people here on Social Security in this country who are still paying off their student loans. That is a shame upon America. They cannot even refinance their student loans.

Instead of confabbing in the corner about how to bring a trade bill to this floor, why don't we fix the student loan problem? Why don't we raise the minimum wage? Why don't we pass a highway bill that is funded to help middle-class people?

It is all a matter of perspective, my friends. We still have not done equal pay for equal work, so women are not making what they should. That hurts our women when they retire. They have lost more than \$400,000 in income.

Instead of standing in the corner and figuring out how to bring a trade bill to the floor, they ought to be fixing equal pay for equal work. They ought to be fixing student loans for our students. They ought to be passing a highway bill. They ought to be increasing the minimum wage. They ought to deal with currency fairness because our trading partners play with their currency in order to push forward their products. But oh, no, that is not on the agenda.

We could have an agenda for a vibrant middle class. But instead of that, we are moving toward a trade bill.

I know there are some who disagree with me and who come down to this

floor and say: We are going to create jobs with this trade bill; it is going to be great. Let them explain how we are not going to see some of the 12 million jobs that are manufacturing jobs in America not move to countries that pay 56 cents an hour; another country, \$1.19 an hour.

I know they will disagree with me. They are making all of these promises. The more I hear it, the more I hear the echoes of the NAFTA debate. That was a long time ago, and I was here then. In 1988, I voted for fast-track authority to allow the administration to negotiate the North American Free Trade Agreement. Then, 5 years later, I saw the deal. It was a bad deal, and I voted no, but it was too late—because when I saw the deal, I knew I could not fix it because that is what fast-track is.

What this majority today is saying to us is vote for fast-track and give up your right, Senator BOXER, to amend this trade agreement. They say: Well, it is very transparent. Go down and look at it.

Let me tell you what you have to do to read this agreement. Follow this: You can only take a few of your staffers who have to have a security clearance—because, God knows why, this is secure, this is classified. It has nothing to do with defense. It has nothing to do with going after ISIS. It has nothing to do with any of that, but it is classified.

I go down with my staff whom I can get to go with me, and as soon as I get there, the guard says to me: Hand over your electronics.

OK. I give over my electronics.

Then the guard says: You cannot take notes.

I said: I cannot take notes?

Well, you can take notes, but you have to give them back to me, and I will put them in a file.

I said: Wait a minute. I am going to take notes, then you are going to take my notes away from me, then you are going to have them in a file and you can read my notes—not on your life.

So instead of standing in a corner trying to figure out a way to bring a trade bill to the floor that does not do anything for the middle class, that is held so secretively that you need to go down there and hand over your electronics and give up your right to take notes and bring them back to your office, they ought to come over here and figure out how to help the middle class, how to extend the highway bill, how to raise the minimum wage, how to move toward clean energy, how to fix our currency manipulation that we see abroad.

Anyway, I take you back to 1988. I voted for fast-track for NAFTA. Instead of the millions of new jobs that were promised, by 2010 the United States had lost 700,000 jobs.

Instead of standing in a corner figuring out how we are going to lose more jobs, we ought to do something that works for the middle class.

Let me tell you what happened with NAFTA. Instead of improved pay for