

They spur economic growth and create jobs. One such place is Darn Tough Socks—which sounds like a very small place, but it is not. They decided we should have upscale brand quality socks with a lifetime guarantee, produced in America, and not—like so many other things—have to be exported from other companies. They have done a huge amount of charity work in our State. But they are also one who shows that jobs can be created in America and can thrive in America.

As I said, in Vermont, small businesses are the foundation of our State's economy, and are incubators of innovation that spur economic growth, create jobs, and promote the quality that is known as the Vermont Brand. I am proud of the many Vermont success stories that often start out as a family business—sometimes located in an old farm house or tool shed—and mature into world-class operations that support and benefit the communities in which they operate. Our Nation's economy is growing, but in today's fast-changing business environments, the status quo is no longer enough. Darn Tough Vermont in Northfield, VT, is one such business that is not just surviving, but is thriving, in part because of its evolution in today's global marketplace, but most importantly, because of the dedicated workers that help the business grow. Darn Tough, a brand launched from its parent company, Cabot Hosiery Mills, exemplifies Vermonters' spirit of entrepreneurship, creativity, perseverance, and old fashioned hard work.

Darn Tough's President and CEO Ric Cabot grew up thinking about socks. After all, Ric's grandfather and father succeeded in partnering their Vermont private-label sock company with national outlet stores. For a while, Cabot Hosiery Mills enjoyed growing sales, but 10 years ago, the mill saw their sales take a considerable hit, as their customers shifted business overseas. Ric stepped in to help his family navigate the uncertainty that lay ahead. The solution to their problem was a long process that led to the establishment of Darn Tough, an upscale brand of quality socks with a lifetime guarantee. Like so many other businesses, the Cabots did not move jobs offshore; they maintained the Cabot promise of quality while ensuring future employment to over 150 Vermonters. It is because of their belief in their product, and a nimble business approach, that a 36-year-old company has kept its doors open and continues to create jobs for Vermonters. Their most recent announcement that they intend to expand their Northfield, VT, mill by 100,000 square feet will result in an additional 50 jobs to the Northfield area.

Darn Tough, its leadership and its employees, are part of the fabric of the community. Most recently, the company donated complimentary socks for participants in the 20th anniversary of the Penguin Plunge, a fundraiser for the Special Olympics Vermont athletes

who will compete in this year's winter games, for participants who raise \$520 or more. This is just another example of how Vermont businesses give back, even in the toughest of times.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that an article from the Vermont Digger, dated February 8, 2015, be printed in the RECORD.

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

[From the Vermont Digger, Feb. 8, 2015]

DARN TOUGH SOCK FACTORY EXPANSION WILL ADD 250 TO 300 JOBS IN NORTHFIELD

(By C.B. Hall)

For Northfield, the news couldn't be better. Cabot Hosiery Mills, which has been making its Darn Tough wool socks since 2003, announced this month it is embarking on an expansion that will add 100,000 square feet—more than two acres—to its plant by the end of 2016.

CEO and president Ric Cabot expects the new facility will add 250 to 300 new jobs to the mill's payroll over the next five years. One new manufacturing position typically creates 1.6 additional local jobs in the service sector, according to the federal Advanced Manufacturing National Program Office, meaning that those new positions will translate into as many as 780 new jobs for the community as a whole. The expansion will make Cabot the town's second-largest employer, after Norwich University.

Cabot Hosiery sales have increased by 60 percent in each of the past five years.

The addition to the plant, which will nearly triple the current square footage of the factory, will "meet and get out ahead of customer demand," Cabot says.

The new space will be attached to the present facility, and will be designed so that more space can be added in the future. "Right now we're looking out five to six years," he says.

While other companies have outsourced manufacturing overseas, Cabot Hosiery kept its operations in Vermont and went after the high end sock market.

"There isn't one thing that makes us successful," Cabot says. "I'm the third generation in my family in the sock business. There's socks in the blood."

Ric Cabot's father, Marc Cabot, launched the firm in 1978, vowing that "knitting is going to come back to New England," according to a trade press article still hanging on the plant lobby's wall.

"Up until 2003 we were making socks for other people, like Gap and Banana Republic," Ric Cabot continues the story.

When the big retailers began to buy socks from offshore companies demand plummeted. Cabot says in the early 2000s the hosiery mill almost went out of business. The company reduced the workforce and cut health insurance and 401(k) plans for workers. The plant operated four days a week.

"I took it upon myself to come up with something unique, something different, something that we could sell [and] I came up with Darn Tough. I gave away 3,500 pairs at the Vermont City Marathon and people liked them."

A dozen years later, Cabot hails Northfield as "the sock capital of the world." The brand name for a new line of socks he developed—Darn Tough Vermont—not only refers to the quality of the Merino wool used in the socks, but also "to coming through the hardships [of the early 2000s]—to having to climb out of the hole we were in. The deck was beginning to be stacked against the domestic manufacturer."

In his view, the company has thrived on adversity. "The harder it is, the tougher it is, the better it is. If it's easy, what's the point?" Today he estimates Chinese socks are worn by 60 to 75 percent of the nation's population, while the rest of the hosiery sold in the U.S. comes from Mexico, Honduras, Vietnam, or Canada. Domestic production accounts for less than 10 percent of the trade, and U.S. sock manufacturers number fewer than 50, he says. Cabot operates the only sock mill in New England.

"The ones that are left have focused on quality, a premium product, with price not the driving factor in the sale." That puts Cabot Hosiery in a narrow market niche of the sort that has also sustained Vermont enterprises like Wall Goldfinger, or Morrisville stove manufacturer Hearthstone, or even the state's craft brewers.

"Nobody ever outsourced anything for the quality," he says.

Sheep in Australia, New Zealand and the U.S. Southwest supply 100 percent of Cabot's wool, while the socks are sold in national and international markets. In this global business environment, the Darn Tough brand projects a clear pride of place in its advertising slogan "still Made In Vermont, USA."

Cabot's expansion is especially welcome news in the town of Northfield, which is reeling from job losses.

Jeff Schulz, Northfield's town manager, says "the town's had some challenges."

Wall Goldfinger, the high-end furniture company that employed 45 workers in Northfield, moved to Randolph in 2012 rather than cope with the possibility of flooding out again. Wall Goldfinger's plant floor was damaged by floodwaters from the Dog River during Tropical Storm Irene in August 2011.

The local economy will lose another 55 to 60 jobs when Northfield Savings Bank, a local fixture since the 19th century, moves its corporate headquarters to Berlin in four months.

Jane Kolodinsky, who chairs the Department of Community Development and Applied Economics at the University of Vermont, is optimistic about Northfield's prospects.

"The fact that they do have a university there, that is definitely going to be a help," she says. "Then, with Cabot Hosiery, you're going to have two stable employers. You've got enough to support some sort of economic base for the community."

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. THUNE. 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 HOMELAND SECURITY FUNDING

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, for the past week Democrats in the Senate have been filibustering a bill to fund the Department of Homeland Security for the remainder of the fiscal year. They object to the bill because it does not fund President Obama's Executive overreach on immigration—despite the fact that the President spent years declaring he didn't have the constitutional authority to grant amnesty.

Quoting what the President told an audience on July 25, 2011:

Believe me, the idea of doing things on my own is very tempting, I promise you. Not just on immigration reform. But that's not how our system works. That's not how our democracy functions. That is not how our Constitution is written.

On January 30, 2013, the President stated, "I am not a king. . . . I am required to follow the law."

That same day he said:

If this was an issue I could do unilaterally, I would have done it a long time ago. . . . The way our system works is Congress has to pass legislation. I then get an opportunity to sign it and implement it.

Well, President Obama was right. The Constitution does not give the President authority to make laws. It is Congress's job to make laws, and it is the President's job to execute them. Clearly, based on these statements, the President knows that. He has reiterated that sentiment more than 20 times over the past few years. Yet a few months ago he decided to ignore the law and the Constitution in an attempt to make immigration law by Executive fiat. How can he possibly justify that?

Members of his own party were troubled by that decision.

"I have to be honest, how this is coming about makes me uncomfortable," said a colleague from the State of Missouri back in November.

The junior Senator from Indiana said that "the President shouldn't make such significant policy changes on his own."

The junior Senator from Minnesota admitted, "I have concerns about executive action."

"I also frankly am concerned about the constitutional separation of powers," said the Independent Senator from the State of Maine.

Many Democrats here in the Senate Chamber, as well as an Independent, have expressed their reservations and their concerns about how the President has proceeded. Democrats are right to be concerned, which makes it particularly troubling that Democrats are now trying to shut down the Department of Homeland Security to protect the President's overreach because, make no mistake, Democrats are refusing to fund the Department of Homeland Security unless funding is provided for the President's unconstitutional attempt to make his own immigration laws.

If Democrats don't like this bill, they should vote to debate the measure and offer amendments to fix the parts they don't like. Republicans are ready and willing to entertain Democrats' amendments. In fact, the Republican leader has offered to let Democrats alternate amendments with Republicans on a one-to-one basis. An open debate is what the Senate is known for on a big issue. If Democrats want to fund actions that even they have admitted are troubling, they are welcome to offer an amendment to provide that funding. They have that opportunity.

What we are talking about is the Republican leader, Senator McConnell, offering an open process—something that we have talked about since we became the majority, something that we were denied in the last session of Congress when we were in the minority. We have the opportunity to have an open debate, offer amendments, and vote on those amendments. That is precisely what majority leader Senator McConnell has put forward. He has given Democrats that option.

Let's put the bill on the floor. We will have a chance to offer amendments. If Democrats don't like what is in the bill, they will have an opportunity to offer amendments, have that debate, and vote.

Democrats need to stop their obstruction and move forward on this bill. Blocking all funding to the Department of Homeland Security is not a responsible solution, especially when the Democrats are blocking the bill solely to protect Presidential actions that the President himself has admitted are unconstitutional and outside the scope of his authority.

We can end all this gridlock that is existing right now on the Senate floor simply by the Democrats allowing us to get on this bill and end the filibuster. Give us an opportunity to debate and offer amendments. Let's have that debate—a debate that is clearly important to a lot of people across this country and certainly a lot of people here in the Chamber of the Senate. We are going to be denied that opportunity if the current filibuster and current blocking of even getting on that legislation continues by the Democrats.

FOREIGN POLICY

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I would also like to take a few minutes today to discuss the President's foreign policy or lack thereof. "Lack thereof" seems to be the most accurate description of the President's lead-from-behind foreign policy. Whether it is a Russian proxy war in Ukraine or the use of chemical weapons in Syria, the President is slow to respond and unclear about American goals even when he does.

Months after the ascension of ISIS—a terrorist organization so radical that even Al Qaeda considers it to be too extreme—the President still hasn't laid out a strategy for combating this threat. ISIS represents a horrifying new nadir in the annals of terrorism. There is apparently no act of brutality this organization rejects. Yet a clear plan for defeating ISIS has yet to be articulated.

This week the President is finally supposed to send Congress an authorization for the use of military force against ISIS. I look forward to examining that authorization. Since ISIS first emerged, the President has had the authority he needs to go after this terrorist group, but I think seeking additional authorization from Congress is

wise, and I hope it will help define his strategy for combating this enemy and supporting our partners in this fight.

America clearly cannot fix all the world's problems, but we can help. We can build a coalition, and we can lead. We can give our commanders in the field the tools they need to meet our clear and growing threats.

Six years of indecision, mistakes, and Presidential irresolution has diminished America's image with our allies. The triumph of the President's political calculus over clear military and diplomatic objectives has made the world less safe, not more. Now more than ever we need a clearly articulated foreign policy from the President and the commitment to back it up.

Later this week we will consider the nomination of Ash Carter to be Secretary of Defense. Dr. Carter seems to be a very capable individual, and I believe he will serve our country well. But changing personnel alone won't fix the President's foreign policy problems. Even a very capable Secretary of Defense cannot succeed if his hands are tied by the lack of a coherent strategy from the President.

As crises multiply around the world, the President needs to provide the leadership that is required from our Commander in Chief. Whether it is defeating ISIS, standing up to Russia, or confronting Iran's nuclear ambition, it is high time we saw the leadership from our President that our country needs and deserves.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. FLAKE). Without objection, it is so ordered.

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY FUNDING

Mr. HEINRICH. Mr. President, funding for the Department of Homeland Security runs out in 17 days. Rather than working with Democrats to pass a clean Department of Homeland Security appropriations bill, many Republicans are prioritizing politics over our national security.

With threats emerging every day both at home and abroad, casting doubt on future funding for the Department of Homeland Security is a terrible idea. Shutting down DHS has real consequences, especially in border States such as New Mexico. A DHS shutdown would threaten public safety, hinder interstate commerce, hurt our economy, and jeopardize critical funding for State, local, and tribal government activities.

Some of my Republican colleagues are willing to let these consequences happen because they have an immigration policy disagreement with the