

Whatever the reason, instead of reaching out and working together, we have heard a parade of horrors: It will run up deficits. It only benefits the wealthy. Instead of investing in workers to make more profits, businesses will just hoard their money. We have even heard that provision after provision will literally kill people.

As we heard objections get more and more outlandish, including the Biblical end of time, we heard the critiques get even more petty. We even heard the other side use procedural rules to complain about the title of the bill. What we haven't heard is how those opposed to this bill would solve the wage problem. They don't have a theory about why wages have stagnated or a vision for how to get them moving again, but we do. We passed it last night, and this reform will start to move wages again. This reform makes our corporate tax rates competitive again. It removes the incentive to invest abroad rather than right here at home.

It is no surprise that the Business Roundtable, the Chamber of Commerce, the National Federation of Independent Business—the organization that represents small businesses across this country—the National Retail Federation, the National Association of Home Builders, and the American Farm Bureau Federation support this bill.

In fact, you can see this small portion of a stack of letters I received from hundreds of farmers from across the State of Colorado who wrote to my office and said: I would like to join Colorado Farm Bureau to support tax reform that works for Colorado's farmers and ranchers. There are hundreds of people saying: Please help reform our Tax Code; cut our taxes. These letters came from real Coloradans, people from all four corners of the State who know how important real reform is to them. These groups know that this reform—these individuals know that this reform translates into more growth for the American economy, higher wages for American workers.

The Tax Foundation has estimated that this reform will bring 339,000 new, full-time equivalent jobs, increase GDP, and raise workers' wages. I have heard a lot of doubt about that part. I have heard a lot of people say that no wage growth is going to occur, that no money will come from these greedy corporations. But look at the news today, because today companies across America have already started to respond to this pro-growth tax reform.

Just hours ago, AT&T announced that it will invest an additional \$1 billion in the United States in 2018 and that it will give more than 200,000 of its U.S. employees a bonus of \$1,000—all because of the tax relief bill that we have been working on that we passed today. Similarly, today Boeing announced that it will make a \$300 million investment in charitable giving, worker training and education, and infrastructure and facility enhance-

ments. Both of these companies made it very clear that these investments—over \$1 billion of investment and 1,000 to 200,000 employees in the United States—are because of the tax bill that the House passed today and that we passed early this morning.

There is more on the way, but the business side isn't the only way it brings relief to American families and it is certainly not the most important. The reforms we have made on the personal side will deliver relief to Americans across the Nation.

A family of four earning the median American income of \$73,000 will see their tax bill go down by \$2,000, and that is nearly 60 percent next year from what it was this year. A single parent with two children and an income of \$52,000 will see a tax cut of nearly \$1,900. In a nation where too many people can't pull together \$100 in 24 hours, these tax reductions alone are an enormous benefit. These are real benefits to the American people.

Although there may be some naysayers in Washington who apparently have plenty of money, to people in Colorado, people in the West, people across this country, that is a big deal. These are benefits to real people, and I am glad to be a part and honored to be a part of delivering this real relief.

I am also proud to have done this in a way that creates many provisions that are especially important to Colorado. We have made it easier to take advantage of the medical expense deduction. We have expanded the child tax credit and the 529 programs. We have protected other education provisions, such as the student loan interest deduction and tax breaks for America's teachers. We have made sure our farming co-ops are treated fairly, and we have made sure our growing brewing and distilling industry is treated fairly as well. We have made a dent in the unfair death tax, and that is a big deal for the hundreds of farmers and ranchers who have contacted my office. We have ended the ObamaCare individual mandate, so no longer will the people in Colorado who earn less than \$50,000 be subjected to a tax fine, a penalty by the IRS, simply because they can't afford an unaffordable ObamaCare policy. We have helped ensure America's energy security by opening up new resource opportunities in a responsible manner, making sure that we simultaneously ensure that Colorado's renewable energy industry continues to flourish by making sure that today's credits for wind, solar, and refined coal are still available. That is what we did in this legislation.

Mr. President, this is historic reform. I am proud to be a part of it. I am proud to have voted for it. We can already see today that as a result of the work we have done, Americans are seeing the benefit.

Mr. President, I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

#### CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I am here now for the 190th "Time to Wake Up" speech to talk about an issue that falls at the intersection of climate change and jobs and consumer power and protection. You would think that a policy that simultaneously reduces the carbon emissions responsible for climate change and boosts American industrial competitiveness and puts thousands of dollars back into the pockets of American consumers would be pretty universally popular. Unfortunately, you would be wrong.

The corporate average fuel economy standards, known as the CAFE standards, set a minimum threshold for the average fuel economy of cars and light trucks that are sold in the United States. In 2011, the major automakers here in America—Ford, GM, and the others—enthusiastically endorsed voluntary new fuel efficiency standards which would gradually increase the fuel economy for their cars and light trucks to 54.5 miles per gallon on average by 2025.

Think about that for a second. In 2011, average fuel economy for these vehicles was stuck below 30 miles per gallon. The CAFE standards hadn't budged in years, and as a result, our automakers had stopped innovating to make cars more fuel efficient. They didn't have to make them more fuel efficient. And when gas prices soared in the mid-2000s, it was consumers who were on the hook.

Today, thanks to the voluntary agreement that was reached by the automakers, the CAFE standard is presently over 40 miles per gallon for cars and over 30 miles per gallon for light trucks. Consumers have already saved \$42 billion at the pump because of those increased fuel economy standards. Consumers who purchase a new car in 2025, on average, will save about \$8,000 on gas over the lifetime of that car because of those new fuel economy standards.

Of course, it is not just the consumers who win under the new CAFE standards; the environment also wins. Already the American auto fleet's increased average fuel economy has resulted in 195 million fewer metric tons of carbon emissions, and, of course, with the carbon emissions come all the rest of the pollution out of a car's tailpipe, so it is a big environmental benefit. Over the life of the CAFE standards program, total carbon emissions reductions should total 6 billion metric tons. This is huge because transportation is now the largest source of carbon emissions in the United States, and carbon emissions from cars and

light trucks account for almost one-sixth of the Nation's total.

If we are to be successful in keeping the average global temperature increase under 2 degrees Celsius—the upper bound, beyond which scientists tell us the consequences of climate change will likely be irreversible—then we have to significantly reduce our auto emissions. That is the target of the Paris climate agreement, which is represented here in this graph, from business as usual here, to all of the carbon emissions savings and efficiencies necessary to reach our Paris goal right here. Of all of this—power sector, industrial sector, efficiencies, home sector—all of it—this gold wedge right here represents the piece of it that we achieve by meeting these CAFE standards. So it is pretty important to meet those standards if we are going to hit the Paris climate goals, and it is pretty important to hit the Paris climate goals if we don't want to condemn our children and grandchildren to a very hazardous future.

Here is what is strange. The exact same set of industry players who voluntarily signed onto and supported the stronger fuel efficiency standards just 4 years ago through their trade association are now working hand in hand with EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt—when something bad is happening for the environment, you can almost always find him around—to weaken them, to undo what they voluntarily agreed to and promised the American people.

Following the election of Donald Trump, the Auto Alliance—the trade group that represents automakers like Ford, General Motors, Toyota, and Volvo—claimed that the very same standards the automakers had voluntarily supported just a few years before now reflect what they call an “extraordinary and premature rush to judgment.” Shortly after Pruitt came into office, the Auto Alliance asked him to revisit the standard.

By the way, just before I gave this speech, I googled “Auto Alliance.” I went to their website, and I hit the search engine on it. I typed in “climate change” and hit “search.” Those words “climate change” do not appear on the Auto Alliance's website, to give you an idea how seriously they take this problem, at least at the trade association level.

So the Auto Alliance, when Pruitt came in, asked him to revisit this CAFE standard that their member companies had all agreed to. Pruitt, who, as Oklahoma's attorney general, had been notoriously compliant to industry, gladly complied.

The Auto Alliance has a long history as the trailing edge of the automotive industry, opposing seat belts, opposing air bags, and opposing catalytic converters. Now, in the polluter-friendly Trump administration, it sees a tempting chance to sell more gas-guzzlers. But is that smart? Over the long term, does this risk actually consign American automakers to global irrelevance?

We sell these cars in an international market, so let's look at what that international market is moving to. Countries around the world have realized that the future of the automobile lies not with the gasoline-powered internal combustion engine but with alternative sources of power—electricity or hydrogen fuel cells, for instance.

By the way, I just got a Chevrolet Bolt, the all-electric car. Not only is that good for the environment, it is a wonderful car to drive. It is a fun car to drive. It is great vehicle.

China, the world's largest car market, recently announced that by 2025, 20 percent of new cars sold there must run on alternative fuels, and it is on its way to an eventual total ban of the sale of gasoline and diesel-powered cars. That is where the biggest car market in the world is headed.

The European Union is the world's third largest car market. The Netherlands has announced that starting in 2030, all cars sold must be emissions-free. Belgium is considering a similar measure. France and the United Kingdom will ban sales of new gasoline and diesel-powered cars starting in 2040. Norway, while not a member of the EU, is very much part of that European economy. They are even more ambitious. By 2025—just over 7 years from now—all new cars sold in Norway must be emissions-free.

Moving on to Japan, the world's fourth largest car market—Japan now has more electric charging stations than it has gas stations. India is the fifth largest car market. It has announced that by 2030, all new cars sold there must be electric or hybrid vehicles. So with the entire world moving toward cleaner, newer technology and innovative vehicles, why does this automotive lobby group—the Auto Alliance—suddenly want to renege on the promise its members made to the American people to raise and abide by those CAFE standards?

We should hope that our business leaders would be honorable enough to keep their word. That is a fairly basic proposition. But if the future of the industry lies with ever more fuel-efficient cars—hybrids, electric cars, fuel cell cars—why would the auto industry in America be furiously lobbying the Trump administration to go backward? Breaking your word to go backward doesn't seem to make sense, even from a business point of view.

Electric vehicles and alternative fuel vehicles represent the future of the auto industry. China and other countries get this. The Chinese are trying to poach our electrical engineers to develop their automotive industry so that it can one day beat ours. Meanwhile, executives at our automakers are scheming with Pruitt to head back to the past, to get out of the promise that they made to build more innovative, fuel-efficient cars.

Investing in the technologies of the future will help ensure that the electric vehicle revolution, which is on our

doorstep, doesn't leave America behind, doesn't leave American innovators behind, doesn't leave American workers behind, and doesn't leave American automakers behind.

A midterm review of these CAFE standards found that the automakers already have the technology to meet the new standard and that the new standard will save money for their customers. It is to the benefit of their customers to keep going with the CAFE standards they agreed to.

An independent analysis by the non-profit organization CERES found that the CAFE standards provide automakers and their suppliers the certainty they need to increase investment in the cleaner technologies that are necessary for the long-term health of the industry, and with that certainty that leads to increased investment, the increased investment leads to jobs.

This ought to be a no-brainer. A policy that protects consumers and the environment while promoting innovation and making American companies more competitive for the global market should be something we can all agree on. But there is also a simpler, more old-fashioned principle at stake here: Keep your word.

Ford, GM, and the others told the American public that they would compete for car buyers' business by delivering quality, energy-efficient vehicles. That is what they told the American public, and they said it voluntarily. This wasn't forced down their throats through a regulatory proceeding; this was a voluntary agreement that they signed up for and were enthusiastic about at the time.

They should keep their word. Why is that asking too much of American corporate leadership? Keep your word. How basic a principle is that? They should stop their trade association lobbying to water down the CAFE standards promises that they made.

It is a recurring problem around here, as many of us have noticed, that the trade association is usually on the trailing edge of the industry; it is like the worst voice of the industry. That is surely the case here, where the trade association for our American automakers is trying to get them to set it up so they will break their word to the American people about a promise that they made—a very simple one, which the technology is already there to achieve.

Even if you don't care one whit about climate change, even if you laugh that off, even if you go down the Trump road that it is a Chinese hoax, we still ought to be honoring those CAFE standards for American jobs, for American ingenuity, and for American innovation.

Thank you.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

#### 2017 SERGEI MAGNITSKY SANCTIONS LIST

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I wish to take this time to talk about two matters of human rights, which I know the Presiding Officer has been very much engaged with as an active member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. I want to share this information with our colleagues.

This month marks the fifth anniversary of the 2012 Sergei Magnitsky Rule of Law and Accountability Act. Today, with the publication of five new sanctions designations, the citizens of the Russian Federation—many of whom strive for a future governed by the rule of law—can claim a small victory over oppression. I hope that today's news provides a semblance of justice for the family of Sergei Magnitsky and those who continue to fight against corruption and human rights abuses across the country.

The Magnitsky list now includes 49 names—an important testament to the central importance that accountability and human rights should play in U.S. foreign policy.

I think the Members of this body are familiar with the circumstances surrounding Sergei Magnitsky's death. He was a young lawyer in Russia representing a company. He discovered corruption, and he did what any lawyer should do. He reported it to the authorities. As a result, he was arrested. He was tortured, denied medical care, and died in prison.

As a result of that, legislation was introduced. I was proud to sponsor it with my good friend Senator MCCAIN. It was enacted into law, as I said, 5 years ago. It holds those who perpetrate these violations of human rights accountable by denying them the right to visit our country—visa applications—or to use our banking systems.

The five additions to this list include Andrei Pavlov, Yulia Mayorova, and Alexei Sheshenia for their roles in the Magnitsky case and Ramzan Kadyrov and Ayub Kataev for gross violations of human rights. I appreciate the work of career officials at the Treasury and State Departments for their work in investigating and designating these important cases.

Andrei Pavlov is a Russian lawyer who played a central role orchestrating the false claims used in the \$230 million tax fraud that Sergei Magnitsky uncovered. His addition to the Magnitsky list is long overdue, as he played an essential role in the plot.

Yulia Mayorova is the former wife of Pavlov and a Russian lawyer. She also reportedly played a role in helping to facilitate the fraud uncovered by Sergei Magnitsky.

Alexei Sheshenia also reportedly played key roles in both the 2006 theft of the \$107 million in taxes paid by RenGaz and in the 2007 theft of the \$230 million of taxes paid by Hermitage. I understand that in both tax thefts, shell companies beneficially owned by Alexei Sheshenia used forged backdated contracts to obtain judgments against companies that paid a significant amount of taxes.

Ramzan Kadyrov is a renowned human rights abuser who has brutally run the Republic of Chechnya for more than 10 years. Under his rule, human rights offenders have been murdered, and gay men have disappeared. He has destroyed any semblance of the rule of law in the Republic. Over the course of his time in power, there have been credible allegations of his directing assassinations deployed across Russia and Europe. Human rights groups have documented many cases of torture and extrajudicial killings by forces under his control.

Ayub Kataev is a prison warden and head of the branch of the Chechen internal affairs ministry. Earlier this year, Chechen authorities reportedly set up concentration camps for gay men under his control. He certainly belongs on this list.

Since 2012, Senator MCCAIN and I have conducted rigorous oversight to ensure robust implementation of the Magnitsky law. In 2016, we wrote to the State Department with certain suggestions for inclusions on the list relevant to the death of Sergei Magnitsky. We also expressed concerns that the allegations of torture in Chechnya against gay men and other human rights violations in the North Caucasus should be investigated. I am pleased they took action that was responsive to both of our inquiries.

I want my colleagues to know that I do believe this administration has conducted the review on the Magnitsky list the way it should have been—keeping in close contact with Members of the Senate. I think the result speaks to the quality of work that was done in this year's list.

America's values are our interests. As a country, we must remain steadfastly committed to the principles embedded in the Magnitsky law—accountability, the rule of law, and respect for human rights. The American people expect U.S. policymakers to advance these principles in all aspects of our diplomatic relations. I welcome today's announcement and also expect the first publication of the "Global Magnitsky" sanctions designations this week.

As the Presiding Officer is well aware, we have recently passed the "Global Magnitsky" law that applies similar standards for human rights violations globally. That list should be made available, we hope, sometime this week.

#### VENEZUELA HUMANITARIAN CRISIS

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, a second subject that I wish to talk about today on human rights deals with the collapse in Venezuela. I come to the floor to speak about Venezuela's growing humanitarian tragedy and accelerating economic collapse.

Late last June, here on the Senate floor, I described Venezuela as a nearly failed State, where authoritarian leaders profit from links to corruption and drug trafficking, while the Venezuelan people are subject to precarious humanitarian conditions and human rights abuses. Disturbingly, the situation has only deteriorated since the time I was last on the floor talking about the circumstances.

With Venezuela's humanitarian crisis growing daily, conditions facing Venezuelan children are particularly dire. This week, the New York Times published a heartbreaking investigation of how Venezuelan children dying of hunger. It states:

Parents go days without eating, shriveling to the weight of children themselves. Women line up at sterilization clinics to avoid having children they cannot feed. Boys leave home to join street gangs that scavenge for scraps. . . . Crowds of adults storm dumpsters after restaurants close. Babies die because it is hard to find or afford infant formula, even in emergency rooms.

That is in our hemisphere in Venezuela.

The Catholic relief organization Caritas has determined that over 50 percent of the children are suffering from nutritional deficiencies. They project that 280,000 Venezuelan children could eventually die of hunger without an urgently needed humanitarian response.

As the Venezuelans increasingly suffer the ravages of hunger, the country's hospital system is collapsing. Essential medicines are in short supply, and more than half of the Nation's operating facilities no longer function or have sufficient supplies. Disturbingly, international relief organizations have found that over 60 percent of the Venezuelan hospitals don't even have potable water.

Amid these crisis conditions, Venezuelan President Maduro repeatedly denies the existence of this country's humanitarian crisis. He has even taken to the unprecedented step of setting up a party-controlled food distribution system referred to as CLAPS, and his government now uses food as a tool of political patronage.

The result is that the United States and our partners in the hemisphere now confront the situation where the Maduro regime would rather see its people go hungry than accept the foreign assistance the Venezuelans desperately need. This man-made tragedy is absolutely unacceptable.