

Mr. DONNELLY. Mr. President, I want to thank my colleagues from Pennsylvania and Minnesota, who are still in the Chamber with us right now. Their focus has always been on honoring hard work, on making sure that we keep our word to the truckdriver who has paid in every day, who is riding down the Pennsylvania Turnpike or the Schuylkill Expressway or heading up I-35 in Minnesota and that we keep the promise that was made to them after 30, 35 years of hard work, of driving, of trying to keep people safe, of making a difference, of delivering the food people have to eat, the parts people have to put together at work to make sure our country can continue to move forward. Those are the folks we are talking about.

If either of my colleagues would like to say anything else in regard to the amazing, hard work of the miners in Pennsylvania or the teamsters in Minnesota—those are the folks, the Central States Pension Fund and so many other pension funds, as well, that we fight for every single day to try to get this done because, as the Senator from Pennsylvania said, this is a job that is half done right now. We were able to make sure we protected the healthcare benefits that were promised.

There was a miner and his wife with whom I spent time in Oakland City, IN, down in Gibson County where we have so many coal mines. When I saw him, he said: This is one of the greatest days for me when we were able to keep healthcare benefits.

He said: "It's not for me. It's because my wife, who is ill"—and they are both in their eighties—"can now get her medicine again next week." That is what his concern was. It wasn't about himself. It was about his wife and making sure, with the pain she was struggling with and the healthcare problems that she had, that he was able to make sure she would be OK.

That is our job; it is to back up the word that was given to him because he spent his life working nonstop to keep our country moving forward, and all he asked in return is that we keep our word.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.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

#### TAX REFORM

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, the future for American workers is looking bright. A combination of tax reform, which we passed in December, plus other economy-boosting measures, such as lifting burdensome regulations, is starting to produce the kind of economy we need to give Americans access to a future of security and prosperity.

Our goal with tax reform was pretty simple: Make life better for American

workers. That involved a couple of things. For starters, it involved putting more money in Americans' pockets right away by cutting their taxes, and that is what we did. We cut tax rates across the board, nearly doubled the standard deduction, and doubled the child tax credit. Americans are already seeing this relief in their paychecks, but we knew that tax cuts, as helpful as they are, weren't enough.

We needed to make sure that Americans had access to good jobs, good wages, and good opportunities—the kinds of jobs and opportunities that would set them up for security and prosperity for the long term. Since jobs and opportunities are created by businesses, that meant reforming our Tax Code to improve the playing field for businesses so they could improve the playing field for their workers, and that is what we did. I am pleased to report that it is already working.

Less than 5 months into the new tax law, business after business has announced good news for workers—pay increases, bonuses, better benefits, like increased retirement benefits, like new and better education benefits, and enhanced parental leave benefits. So far we have more than 530 examples of businesses making things better for their workers and customers, from giant corporations like Apple to small businesses like the Don Ramon restaurant in West Palm Beach, FL.

Economic indicators are looking good. Last month, the unemployment rate hit its lowest level since 2000. That is right; the last time unemployment was this low, the iPod hadn't even been introduced yet.

Economic growth is on a solid track. The economy's growth rate in the first quarter of 2018 was nearly double what it was during the same period last year.

Small businesses are thriving. The president of the National Federation of Independent Business reports:

Small and independent business owners are notably confident about the economy. They are reporting that sales are strong, profits are good, and employee compensation is increasing. And many are setting into motion plans to expand.

That, again, is from the president of the National Federation of Independent Business. That is borne out by NFIB's recent survey data, which shows the net percentage of businesses raising worker compensation over the last 3 months has increased to 33 percent—the highest level since 2000. That is good news for American workers.

Americans had a tough time during the last administration. Our economy stagnated, and American families struggled. But our economy—and our country—are coming back, and they are coming back stronger than ever.

The Tax Cuts and Jobs Act and other policies we have passed are creating an economy that will allow families to access the jobs, the wages, and the opportunities they need for security today and for prosperity tomorrow. The future is indeed looking brighter.

#### NET NEUTRALITY

Mr. President, I also want to take a moment to discuss the partisan net neutrality resolution that we will be taking up this week. There is support among Senators of both parties for passing net neutrality legislation, and Democrats know that. But instead of moving forward with bipartisan discussions on a net neutrality bill, certain Democrats decided they wanted to play politics. So instead of bipartisan legislation this week, we are taking up a partisan resolution that will do nothing to provide a permanent solution on the issue of net neutrality.

For most of its existence, the internet thrived under a light regulatory touch from Washington, DC. Washington avoided weighing down the internet with burdensome regulations, and the internet flourished as a result, becoming a vehicle for an endless stream of innovation and economic growth.

During the Obama administration, Democrats became convinced that we needed to heavily increase the Federal Government's role, so the Obama FCC reclassified the internet under a regulatory regime that was developed more than 80 years ago to govern monopoly telephone services. That decision posed a number of problems for the future of the internet. For starters, heavy-handed government regulations tend to stifle the kinds of growth and innovation that have always flourished around the internet.

There was also serious reason to be concerned that this new regulatory regime would discourage companies from investing in upgrades to their networks and infrastructure to expand access to broadband. That is a big concern for my State of South Dakota, where too many individuals still lack reliable internet access. In fact, the FCC has since found that the decision to regulate the internet under the 1934—that is right, 1934—telephone regulatory regime has slowed investment, which has restricted the improvement of internet services for rural Americans like those I represent in South Dakota.

In response to these problems, the FCC recently decided to restore the light-touch regulatory regime that the internet had thrived under and which had been in place for two decades prior to 2015 under administrations from both political parties. That, in turn, created the opportunity for us to adopt net neutrality legislation to permanently address concerns about blocking, throttling, and paid prioritization—and to deal with these concerns under a regulatory regime suitable for the 21st century internet. So that is why the FCC went back to the light-touch regulatory regime, rather than the heavyhanded 1934 law that would treat the internet like a Ma Bell-type public utility.

Instead of taking this opportunity to work with Republicans to develop bipartisan legislation, Democrats have decided to play politics. The internet,

like any industry, needs stability to grow and thrive. Internet innovators need to know what the rules of the game are now, and they need to know what the rules of the game are going to be in the future. We can't have a situation where internet regulations vary from administration to administration or, worse yet, from year to year. Imagine a basketball game where the rules changed every quarter or after every timeout. Well, it is pretty safe to say that players would quickly get fed up and start quitting the game, and that is exactly what will happen if we don't have stable rules for the internet.

Too many Americans are not going to be interested in taking risks or investing in innovation if they can't predict what the rules will look like a year down the road. So internet regulation is a serious issue that will affect our Nation for decades to come. This is too important of an issue for partisanship. Yet here we are with just more political theater with a partisan resolution that everybody acknowledges isn't going anywhere.

So, in the wake of the FCC's decision—which gives Congress the perfect opportunity to step in to provide clear guidance and clear rules of the road for the future regarding how the internet is going to be regulated—we have Democrats in the Senate who are in the midst of a political stunt, instead of sitting down and having a serious conversation about net neutrality legislation.

It is time to put together a bipartisan bill and establish long-term stability on internet regulation so the internet can continue to grow and thrive long into the future and not be subject to the whims of one administration or the next administration and rules and regulations that are going to go back and forth with the winds of whatever political party is in the White House or, worse yet, end up spending all the time in court and spending millions of dollars on litigation that could be spent investing in infrastructure that could deliver better services to people all across this country, including those in rural areas like South Dakota.

#### NOMINATION OF GINA HASPEL

Mr. President, we have been getting some great judicial nominees in the Senate, including several this week.

I am also looking forward to confirming another important nomination in the near future, and that is Gina Haspel's nomination to be the Director of the CIA.

Acting Director Haspel is one of the most qualified candidates for the CIA we have ever had. She spent 33 years in the Agency. She served overseas and here at home during the Cold War and Global War on Terrorism. She served in the trenches, and she has held important leadership positions in the Agency. She has won several awards for her work, including the Intelligence Medal of Merit, the George H.W. Bush Award, and the Donovan Award.

Her nomination has been endorsed by six former CIA Directors, including Leon Panetta and John Brennan, who served as CIA Directors under President Obama.

Our Nation and our world are facing a range of conventional and unconventional threats from the possibility of a nuclear-armed Iran to an increasingly aggressive Russia and China, to the ever-present threat of terrorism. We need a leader like Gina Haspel at the head of the CIA—someone who knows intelligence inside and out and who can provide the President with the information he needs to make decisions affecting our Nation's security.

I look forward to confirming Ms. Haspel as CIA Director in the very near future. I hope my colleagues in the Senate, on both sides of the aisle, will join in that endeavor and make sure this important position, at this critical time in our Nation's history, is filled with a very qualified nominee—the right person to serve as the head of that Agency.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

#### CHINA

Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, I want to begin by reading an excerpt of an article that ran on October 8, 2012. It was in the New York Times. The article opened with the following quote:

A House committee issued a blistering bipartisan report on Monday that accused two of China's largest telecommunications companies of being arms of the government that had stolen intellectual property from American companies and could potentially spy on Americans. The House Intelligence Committee said that after a yearlong investigation it had come to the conclusion that Chinese businesses, Huawei Technologies and ZTE Inc., were a national threat because of their attempts to extract sensitive information from American companies and because of their loyalties to the Chinese government.

The story continued by saying:

Allowing the Chinese companies to do business in the United States . . . would give the Chinese government the ability to easily intercept communications and could allow it to start online attacks on critical infrastructure, like dams and power grids.

This was from a bipartisan report in the year 2012, in the month of October, by the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Intelligence. Since then, over and over again, we have heard the intelligence community in this country clearly define this threat. In virtually every one of the open hearings that we had on the Intelligence Committee, I or one of my colleagues have had an opportunity to ask every member of the intelligence community—Director of National Intelligence, Director of the CIA, Director of the FBI, the Director of Counterintelligence, Mr. Evanina, or the nominee before us today—and every time one of us would ask: Would you use a ZTE phone? We are still waiting for one of them to say yes. Every single one of them said no, which is why I was pleased a couple of weeks ago when the Commerce Department brought sanctions against ZTE.

It was not a Congressional issue. Although it could be, it wasn't. It was because, on top of the spying and everything else, ZTE had helped Iran and North Korea evade international sanctions. So the penalty was, American companies could no longer sell component pieces to ZTE, which has led them to being on the brink of being out of business.

No one should feel sorry for ZTE. This is a company heavily subsidized by the Chinese Government that protects them at home, protects them in China, subsidizes them in China but exports them abroad with the hopes that they can help them steal secrets, monitor, and be an arm and tool of intelligence for them. No one should feel sorry for them.

So I was surprised to see, a couple days ago—as the President tweeted and then there have been articles about how perhaps maybe these sanctions might be going away in exchange for a deal on agriculture. I want to tell you, if that is what happens, the President has gotten terrible advice, and it would be a terrible thing for him to do. I think it would be deeply problematic for the national security of the United States and ultimately for his hopes of rebalancing America's relationship with China, geopolitically, economically, commercially, and certainly on security.

The most important thing to understand is, China is carrying out a plan. They put it out there. It is not a conspiracy. It is there for the world to see: Made in China 2025. Made in China 2025 is a plan to dominate the 10 most important technologies of the 21st century. You may ask: Why is that a big deal? Countries would want to do that. They have every right to aspire to that, and I agree. If they want to dominate these 10 fields, they have every right to invest in research and innovation. They have every right to do all of that.

The problem is, that is not how they intend to dominate these fields. The way they intend to dominate the 10 top technologies of the 21st century is to steal the intellectual property, basically the protected, secret ideas our companies are innovating, that American researchers are innovating—to steal that and use it for themselves.

Furthermore, they insist that all of their companies be allowed to sell whatever they want to the United States without any restriction. On the other hand, our companies are restricted—some prohibited—from selling to China's 1.2 billion, 1.3 billion-person market, soon to be the largest economy in the world.

So, in essence, they intend to dominate these 10 fields by cheating their way into a position of dominance, and that alone is not just an economic issue. This is a national security issue. If you dominate the field of artificial intelligence, if you dominate the field of telecommunications, if you dominate the field of aerospace technology,