

continue to work on all the other people who are being unfairly and unjustly held in Turkish prisons.

We need to have justice for Pastor Brunson. We need Turkey to be the ally that we want them to be, and we need President Erdogan to show the leadership and the compassion to bring Pastor Brunson home.

Thank you, Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Montana.

TARIFFS

Mr. TESTER. Mr. President, I rise today to talk about tariffs and their impact on Montana's family farmers and businesses. In Montana we have more than 27,000 family farms and ranches. Folks who farm and ranch these lands are descendants of homesteaders and pioneers, including myself. They are also young producers who may be preparing for their first harvest. Might I add that we don't have enough young producers in our State. The population of farmers is getting far too old.

These folks work 7 days a week, for long hours, to raise the food that feeds our families across this world, and they power our rural economies in this country. Farmers and ranchers are small business operators and owners who are always on tight margins and always are looking to make sure that they can make the books balance by being on the positive side of the ledger. Why? So they can keep their farms and ranches viable to be able to have the next generation take over their operation. Just like any other business—a local bar or a hardware store—you need to be able to make a profit to stay in business.

Producers need to make sure that they have predictability in input costs—we are talking about fertilizers, fuel, and seed—and predictability in markets, the places where we sell our grain, which has always been a challenge and which has become more of a challenge over the past 6 months. When farmers plant a crop, they need to know there is a market for that crop, because if there is not, it can put them in a world of hurt financially.

Unfortunately, in Montana, we are preparing to harvest winter wheat crops as we speak. Spring wheat crops will soon be coming, pulse crops will soon be coming, and oil seeds will soon be coming. The fact is that there is no certainty in any of those crops right now. Why? Because our farmers and our ranchers are being used as pawns in a trade war that I can guarantee not one of them asked for.

This trade war is eliminating access to foreign markets that have taken generations to develop and putting family farm and ranch operations in a financial pinch—such a severe financial pinch that we haven't seen anything like it since the 1980s, when we saw a mass exodus off the land due to bad ag prices.

The retaliatory tariffs against family farmers and ranchers is harming Mon-

tana's No. 1 industry, agriculture. Montana's grain producers produce about \$2 billion worth of wheat, barley, pulse crops, and oil seeds every year. Since the middle of June, the price of No. 1 Dark Northern Spring wheat in southeastern Montana has fallen more than 60 cents a bushel. That is more than 10 percent, and the same can be said throughout the State of Montana.

To put that in perspective, just think what would happen in your business if your prices were reduced by 10 percent right off the top. It would put you in a world of financial hurt, and that is where Montana's farms and ranches are today. If prices continue to plummet, some of these families who have been on the land for over 100 years will be forced to make some very difficult decisions in the next 6 to 8 months.

These tariffs are eliminating producers' access to foreign markets—markets that are in Asia and Europe and markets in Canada and Mexico. In Montana, we sell our grains and our beef to these countries and others: China, Japan, South Korea, Mexico, Pacific Rim countries, and European Union countries. These exports didn't just pop up overnight. They came to fruition after years of hard work, good faith and trust, and negotiations.

Negotiations and trust are being thrown out the window with these tariff fights. In some cases—Japan, for example—it has taken multiple generations to establish these export markets. If we lose them, it will take many generations to get them back. Countries such as Argentina and Russia are circling the markets like sharks, wanting to strike the minute we lose a grip on them to fill those voids.

Take, for instance, Mexico. Mexico is the largest importer of Montana barley in the world. For years, Mexico bought Montana's barley to be able to make beers, like Corona and others. These tariffs have put those markets at risk to the point that one Mexican barley buyer told one of the folks from the barley association of Montana: I don't know that we can depend on America to supply our barley anymore because these tariffs have put our markets at risk.

As a result, Mexico, which is a huge importer of American wheat, just this last spring turned toward Argentina for their wheat for the first time ever. They signed a contract for Argentine wheat to take the place of the wheat from this country, of which Montana is a part and will no longer be supplying.

The real question is, How long is this going to have to go on? We are faced with enough uncertainties in production and agriculture with weather, drought, hail, bugs, and disease. The list goes on. Unfortunately, this is a manmade problem.

I get it. I think the President is right when he talks about holding China accountable. They have stolen a lot of intellectual property. They manipulate their currency. But to put on tariffs where retaliation comes on ag products

is not the right direction to go. We can get their attention by other ways.

I would also say that these tariffs aren't just felt by farmers and ranchers. They are felt by other businesses too. For builders, for example, their costs are going up. In 2016, the voters of Missoula, MT, approved a \$30 million bond to build a new city library. They started the project, but tariffs on steel sent material costs soaring. Now the cost of rebar alone has increased the cost of the project by \$100,000. Library officials have told me that as a direct result of these tariffs, they are preparing with a need to go out and raise another \$500,000 to finish this project. The people of our State have to pay that price.

One of Montana's fastest growing industries is microbreweries. It is a real success story, employing a lot of folks and adding value to grains in our State. They are being hit hard by tariffs on aluminum. These emerging businesses have no other option but to pass that cost on to their patrons.

So we are paying both ways, folks. We are paying on the tariffs coming in, and we are paying on the tariffs being put on our products going out.

In agribusiness, for example, everything that is made of steel is going up and going up significantly. From I-beams to cattle guards, to posts for fencing, to metal for storage bins, anything made out of steel is going up significantly. Manufacturers who have been on the rebound since the 2008 financial crisis now have a hard time bidding contracts on materials. Less of their money is going into their pockets, if there is any left at all, because of these tariffs. Every sector of our economy is feeling the pinch of this escalating trade war.

Fair trade is really important. Getting manufacturing back to this country is really important, but it doesn't appear that we are doing those things. Instead, we are putting our existing businesses—whether it is in production or agriculture, construction or manufacturing—at risk with these trade wars.

We should have open markets. Those markets need to go in both directions, but we shouldn't be driving people into bankruptcy in the meantime. That is what is happening.

I ask: What is the end game? If this trade war continues, I had an ag banker tell me that family farms and ranchers have about 18 months before they have to start liquidating. That is the reality we are facing, and that is not very long.

That is the reason why this body needs to understand that we need to send strong messages to the administration that they can't use farms, ranches, and small businesses as bargaining chips. Their livelihoods are on the line.

Earlier this month, I hosted a roundtable discussion on tariffs at the Billings Chamber of Commerce. I was able to meet Montanans eyeball to eyeball,

and I heard their concerns. This is not a political issue. These tariffs aren't targeted toward Democrats or Republicans. They are targeted at everyone. Ag producers at this moment in time are probably carrying the majority of the load. It needs to stop before the damage is irreversible.

My grandparents homesteaded the land that we farm and lived through the 1930s. My folks, who took over the land, took the farm over in the early 1940s and lived through a lot of hard times themselves. My wife and I took the farm over in the late 1970s, and we saw what happened in the 1980s. We have seen what happens in agriculture, where so many of the folks can't make it on the farm anymore, and they have to have jobs off the farm to be able to make the books balance.

These tariffs are making things harder. We have been down difficult paths in this country before. I don't believe we can afford another punch to the gut in rural America. I will continue to fight for and defend the folks who put food on our table, but their bottom lines are being severely, severely impacted by this trade war.

Now look, the legislation we passed last week is a start. The Senate version of the farm bill provides a safety net, but I am here to state that if things continue to go south for our markets, we are going to be faced with a bill that dumps a bunch of money into production agriculture to keep these folks afloat. Why? Because of tariffs that are being put on ag products. It doesn't have to be this way.

We are an equal branch of government. I believe that both Republicans and Democrats can work on this issue in a commonsense way, especially in this body. The administration needs to understand that if they keep continuing down this war of who can put the most tariffs on products, we are going to have a hard time keeping our businesses afloat, particularly our family farms and ranches in this country. That will not help with food security for our country, and the long-term negative impacts of that are unacceptable.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority whip.

NOMINATION OF BRETT KAVANAUGH

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, it has been a little more than a week since President Trump announced his nomination of Judge Brett Kavanaugh to fill the vacancy on the Supreme Court left by the impending retirement of Justice Anthony Kennedy. In that short period of time, we have seen some of our friends across the aisle run through an almost impressive set of rhetorical calisthenics in an attempt to tank Judge Kavanaugh's confirmation before it even had a chance to begin.

"He will overturn this case or this law," they claim. "He will not be a check on the President," they have tried to say. They have even suggested that he charged too much for baseball

season tickets on his credit card—horror of horrors. Multiple fact-checkers have debunked each of these claims, so they have moved on.

More recently, we have heard from some of our Democratic colleagues that they want to review every single piece of paper—every email, every memo, every document that has passed across Brett Kavanaugh's desk at any point in his career.

Reviewing relevant and important documents is a perfectly normal part of confirming a judicial nominee, but using that as an excuse to delay, foot-drag, and obstruct is not acceptable. We know that the effort to get every memo from the Bush White House during the time he served as Staff Secretary there is really laughable and is only a fishing expedition designed to delay his confirmation until after the Supreme Court begins its work the first Monday in October.

For example, as Staff Secretary, he would have had the responsibility to basically manage the paper flow across the President's desk. These aren't just documents that he, himself, has generated. In fact, I suspect that with the overwhelming majority of them, he would have had nothing to do with creating them. He wouldn't be the author. He wouldn't be making policy recommendations. Basically, he would have navigated all of the documents that went across the President's desk to make sure that they had been reviewed by the appropriate person and that they would have been checked for accuracy. The ideas that every single piece of paper that went across President George W. Bush's desk should be somehow relevant and that we should delay confirmation until we have all had a chance to read it are ridiculous. Is what President Bush had for dinner 14 years ago relevant to Judge Kavanaugh's fitness to serve on the Supreme Court? Obviously not.

Just as, in 2010, the committee quickly processed Justice Kagan, who spent many years in the Clinton White House, I am confident we can expeditiously and efficiently review Judge Kavanaugh's relevant background materials to make sure the vote on his confirmation occurs before the Supreme Court reconvenes in October.

Under Chairman GRASSLEY's leadership, the Judiciary Committee will work to produce as many documents as are relevant and possible so that every Senator can do their due diligence. An important part of our constitutional responsibility is to provide advice and consent, as the Constitution itself says.

The most important thing to remember is that unlike the Kagan nomination, we have 12 years of service on the bench by Judge Kavanaugh. He served on the DC Circuit Court of Appeals in what has often been called the second most important court in the Nation because it is located in the District of Columbia. Most of the major cases involving huge policy disputes confronting

the Federal Government have made their way through his court, and he has written opinions—majority opinions and dissenting opinions—which have all been reviewed by the U.S. Supreme Court. I submit that would be the best evidence of what kind of Justice he would be on the Supreme Court. What kind of judge has he been on the DC Circuit? That is the best evidence.

We shouldn't indulge requests for these fishing expeditions and paper chases that will lead to nothing other than delay. It is important that the vetting process be deliberative and thorough, and it will be. But the volume of documents requested shouldn't be just a pretext to draw this out for political purposes.

Here is an important factoid: Nearly half of the Democratic caucus has already said that they will vote no on Judge Kavanaugh's confirmation to the Supreme Court. Are they going to be requesting documents? Are they going to be saying "Well, I want to look at everything that came across his desk" when they have already announced their public opposition?

Five of them announced their opposition before Judge Kavanaugh was even named. In other words, they would oppose anyone who is nominated by this President. We saw an attempt to filibuster the nomination of Neil Gorsuch to the Supreme Court, which resulted in the change of the precedent. We lowered the number of votes to close off debate from 60 votes to 51 votes because we realized that some across the aisle were so determined to vote against any nominee of this President—no matter how well qualified—there was no way we could confirm a well-qualified candidate. So we changed that.

Both Justices Sotomayor and Gorsuch were confirmed just 66 days after they were nominated. In the case of Judge Kavanaugh, if that same timetable held up, we would be voting on his confirmation about September 13—well in advance of the October deadline when the Court reconvenes. We will have plenty of time to thoroughly vet this nominee in a similar timeframe, which is consistent with the confirmation process for both Republican and Democratic Presidents.

I had the good fortune to sit down with Judge Kavanaugh last week and to renew my acquaintance with him, which first occurred in 2000. As I have recounted here on the floor, when I was attorney general of Texas, I had the privilege to argue a case in front of the U.S. Supreme Court. As one of the best qualified appellate lawyers in the country, having clerked on the Supreme Court, as well, he was one of the lawyers who helped me get ready for that oral argument.

I had a chance not only to get to know him in 2000 but to follow his career on the DC Circuit Court of Appeals. He has consistently impressed me with his thoughtfulness, his deliberativeness, his outstanding legal and