

I urge all of my colleagues to vote yes on these resolutions of advice and consent.

I yield the floor.

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 2 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 12:40 p.m., recessed until 2 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mrs. CAPITO).

EXECUTIVE SESSION—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. HOEVEN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that I be allowed to engage in a colloquy with my colleagues.

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

UNITED STATES-MEXICO-CANADA TRADE AGREEMENT

Mr. HOEVEN. Madam President, I rise today to speak about a very important issue not only for my home State but for our country, and that is the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement, also referred to as the USMCA.

This is the agreement that would replace NAFTA. It will increase exports, expand consumer choice, raise wages, and boost innovation not just for our country but also for two of our strongest trading partners, Canada and Mexico, as well.

In the United States the U.S. International Trade Commission's analysis found that the USMCA will raise GDP by nearly \$63 billion and create more than 176,000 jobs. The implementation of this agreement will also benefit my State, as it will secure and expand market access for our ag producers, and that is true for all of our ag-producing States across the country. It will help to grow our manufacturing base, as well, for our manufacturing States, such as Ohio. I see that my good friend and colleague from Ohio has just joined us. It will provide important support and help for the technology sector and energy sector. All of our different industry sectors stand to benefit from this agreement.

Access to foreign markets is critical for American agriculture and for our producers, who have maintained an ag trade surplus for more than 50 years. We produce far more than we can consume in this country, and we need access to markets in Canada, Mexico, and beyond.

My State of North Dakota is the ninth largest producer of ag goods, exporting and shipping \$4.5 billion worth of ag products around the globe, for example, in 2017.

Farmers and ranchers depend on free and fair trade to sell the highest quality, lowest cost food supply, not just in our country but in the world. We produce the highest quality, lowest

cost food supply. That benefits every single American every single day, and it benefits many other people around the globe if we are able to export to these other countries.

According to the International Trade Commission report, the USMCA will increase U.S. ag and food exports to Canada and Mexico by \$2.2 billion. This agreement secures existing market access, makes ag trade fairer, increases access to the Canadian market, and supports innovation in agriculture, which is why it is critical that Congress consider and pass this agreement as soon as possible.

Passage of the USMCA will help to secure market access in Canada to U.S. farmers and ranchers as the agreement maintains all existing zero-tariff provisions on ag products. Canada and Mexico are crucial markets for U.S. agriculture and the USMCA gives the certainty that these markets will continue to remain open for business.

I have more, but some of my colleagues are here. So I will turn to them, starting with my colleague from Indiana, somebody who has been active in business for many years. He built a business from scratch, from nothing to, I believe, more than 1,000 employees. He is certainly somebody who understands the importance of business and understands the importance of markets and access to those markets, and trade and export. So I turn at this point to the good Senator from Indiana for some of his thoughts on this important issue.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Indiana.

Mr. BRAUN. Madam President, it is true. I am a mainstream entrepreneur, and I have been involved with business my entire life, including the farm markets. I started a turkey farm back in 1979 from scratch, and I was involved in it for 32 years. I sold my share of it to my partner's kids and grandkids. My wife has had a business in downtown Jasper, my hometown, for years.

I have been an entrepreneur. I have dealt with how hard the marketplace is even when things are going well.

I stand to make the point on behalf of Hoosier farmers and businesses and to express my strong opinion that we need to get the USMCA across the finish line.

This agreement is vital to secure our hard-fought market access for American agriculture. At a time when agriculture could never have more challenges, from chronically low prices to the increasing concentration among farmer-suppliers with big corporations, this is one piece of uncertainty we need to eliminate.

In stressing the importance of the USMCA, I would state that despite the fact NAFTA had its faults, it was quite successful in securing markets for farmers. The USMCA is better. It provides stronger access to Canadian markets for U.S. milk, wheat, poultry, and egg products. It ensures that Hoosier wine and spirit makers are treated fair-

ly on Canadian shelves. And it secures the Mexican market for Indiana pork, cheese, and grain.

The USMCA improves on NAFTA in other areas of the economy as well. It adds modern rules for digital trade and stronger protections for American intellectual property. We know how important that is with regard to dealing with the Chinese.

It contains new rules of origin that ensure more manufacturing is conducted in North America and has brand-new rules to bring more of that production back to the United States.

When President Trump ran for office, he ran on a few simple things, and negotiating a NAFTA improvement was one of his core promises to the American public. At the time, Congress had two requests: Follow the guidelines from the trade promotion authority and move quickly—move quickly—to minimize uncertainty. President Trump upheld his end of the bargain. He has delivered an agreement that is better than the original NAFTA in nearly every respect.

This week Congress is ready to vote, and yet we can't. Why? Because House Democrats will not bring it to the floor. Don't believe me? Look at this letter, dated July 8, from several House Democrats.

They say in plain English: Do not send this agreement to the Congress. Do not send this agreement to the Congress.

Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD a letter dated July 8, 2019, to Robert Lighthizer.

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

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, July 8, 2019.

Hon. ROBERT LIGHTHIZER,
Office of the U.S. Trade Representative,
Washington, DC.

DEAR AMBASSADOR LIGHTHIZER: We appreciate all the work you have done with the New Democrat Coalition and the rest of the Democratic caucus to resolve the outstanding issues that must be addressed for a successful, bipartisan passage of the updated North America Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).

These conversations have been frank, productive and engaged in in good faith by all parties, and we are therefore optimistic that these limited concerns can be addressed in a timely manner. While we appreciate your willingness to listen, we have not seen any meaningful progress or tangible proposals from you to address these concerns. It has been clear from the outset that such proposals are necessary for a successful resolution.

The New Democrat Coalition was integral in the development and passage of the Bipartisan Congressional Trade Priorities and Accountability Act of 2015 (TPA). It is our belief, as legislators intimately involved with the law under which the new NAFTA was negotiated, that moving forward with implementing legislation absent the agreement of Democratic leadership would almost certainly be taken as a failure to fulfill the consultation requirements of TPA. We were troubled that you sent up the draft Statement of Administrative Action on May 30

without sufficient consultation, and strongly urge you not to make the same mistake twice.

We look forward to continuing to work with you to develop these proposals to help ensure a strong, bipartisan vote on the updated NAFTA later this year.

Sincerely,

DEREK KILMER,
Chair, New Democrat Coalition.

RICK LARSEN,
Co-Chair, NDC Trade Task Force.

SUZAN DELBENE,
Vice-Chair for Policy, New Democrat Coalition.

GREGORY MEEKS,
Co-Chair, NDC Trade Task Force.

RON KIND,
Co-Chair, NDC Trade Task Force.

LIZZIE FLETCHER,
Co-Chair, NDC Trade Task Force.

Mr. BRAUN. Madam President, this is an outrage. We are ready to pass the USMCA. Today you will hear from Senators who support this deal. In the Senate we have more than enough votes to pass the USMCA. There is no reason to wait.

The Democrats have known the contents of this deal for over 2 years. They knew the provisions offered by the United States and saw the text as it developed. Once the final text was released, the Democrats were stunned. They couldn't figure out how to oppose the USMCA.

First, they argued that Mexico needed to pass its labor reforms. Mexico did so in April. Then, they moved the goalpost, arguing that labor and environmental provisions in the deal were not strong enough, even though the provisions in USMCA are substantially stronger than those in the NAFTA, an agreement that some of them supported.

They still want to move the goalpost. In fact, the USMCA is the first-ever trade agreement to contain provisions requiring a minimum wage for Mexican auto workers. The Democrats still aren't happy. This time they are asking for enforcement. In response, the Mexican President issued assurances that Mexico would enforce the new labor law Democrats had demanded. But NANCY PELOSI is keeping those goalposts moving. The fact of the matter is that the Democrats are blocking USMCA because they do not want to give President Trump a win—the worst of all reasons and what makes this place so objectionable to so many people.

In the meantime, NAFTA remains the law of the land. While they play their political games American workers are still competing under the old NAFTA rules. It is time for NANCY PELOSI to end these political games. We need to pass the USMCA.

In closing, I simply would remind my colleagues that this trade debate is unlike any other this Chamber has ever made. The USMCA is the first-ever re-

negotiation of a major trade agreement. We are not talking about whether we should have an agreement with our Mexican and Canadian partners, because we already do. Instead this debate is about the future of that relationship. Do the American people want the rules in the original NAFTA or do they want the modern protections included in the USMCA?

The USMCA is a substantially better agreement than NAFTA, and the American economy—Hoosiers—need these new rules so that we can move forward into the 21st century with a stronger American economy in the North American region. It is time to pass the USMCA now.

I yield my time.

Mr. HOEVEN. I would like to thank the Senator from Indiana. Like our State, it is a major ag State. It also has manufacturing and many other areas. The USMCA is very important to the State of Indiana. I thank the good Senator for his comments today.

I turn to the senior Senator from Iowa—another State that certainly has a big part in ag—and ask for his comments on the importance of the USMCA.

Mr. GRASSLEY. First of all, I thank Senator HOEVEN for leading this discussion. It is a very important discussion because American farmers, workers, and businesses stand to benefit greatly from the new United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement.

This successor agreement to NAFTA will allow for more market access for agriculture, new commitments in critical areas such as customs, digital trade, intellectual property, labor, environment, currency, and the lowering of nontariff barriers—all translating into higher wages, greater productivity, and more jobs.

As a family farmer, I can say without a doubt that trade with Canada and Mexico is critical to the prosperity of my State of Iowa, the Midwest, and, for that matter, all of rural America. In 2019, a Business Roundtable study found that trade with Mexico and Canada supported 12 million U.S. jobs. The same study found that 130,000 Iowa jobs were supported by trade with Canada and Mexico in 2017, and \$6.6 billion in Iowa goods and services were exported to Canada and Mexico. According to the National Association of Manufacturers, Canada and Mexico purchase nearly half of Iowa's total global manufacturing exports.

President Trump and Ambassador Lighthizer delivered a solid deal to enhance this critical relationship with our good neighbors. Now, Congress must act to implement the U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement. As Ambassador Lighthizer said earlier this year, doing so will not only help the economy of the three countries, but it will enhance the credibility of America's global trade agenda. That is more important than ever, as talks between the United States and China are back on track.

I am looking forward to hearing concrete suggestions from House Demo-

crats sometime soon. I am glad Speaker PELOSI has formed working groups to work with Ambassador Lighthizer to address Democrats' concerns and that these meetings are underway.

About a month ago, I met for a half hour with Speaker PELOSI, and I can assure you that she wants to get to "yes," but she has a lot of new Members. The House of Representatives has the largest number of new Members in that body since 1974, and there is a lot that new Members have to learn. As Speaker of the House of Representatives, she has to make sure those new Members are comfortable with it. I am sure she wants to get there.

Any additions to the USMCA that might come as a result of these negotiations that can improve the outcome of American workers, I am happy to consider.

It is important to remember that USMCA is better than NAFTA by nearly every standard, including labor and environment. I hope discussions between House Democrats and Ambassador Lighthizer are an exercise in getting to the "yes" that I feel Speaker PELOSI wants to get to.

One particular area where everyone can agree is that enforcement across the board is a key compromise that must be hammered out. Factors outside of farmers' hands, such as an oversupply of grain in the global market, an unusually wet spring across the Midwest, and natural disasters, like flooding, have all contributed to increased uncertainty and less profitability for farmers, leading to anxiety among those same farmers. Passing the USMCA will help alleviate some of that uncertainty and anxiety for the years ahead by providing a stable export market for American corn, soybeans, pork, and dairy, to name just a few examples of the benefits not only to farming but the rest of the agenda for manufacturing and services.

I yield the floor.

Mr. HOEVEN. I would like to thank the Senator from Iowa not only for his work on agriculture but also his leadership on the Finance Committee, which is so important to advancing USMCA.

We will now go from the Midwest to the South. This is an agreement that benefits all regions of the country. I now turn to the good Senator from the great State of Arkansas.

Mr. BOOZMAN. I want to thank my colleague Senator HOEVEN for organizing this very important event.

I think you sense a theme building here. Many of my colleagues have spoken about the economic benefits USMCA holds for their specific States, and I would like to add Arkansas to the list.

According to the Arkansas World Trade Center—which, by the way, does an excellent job promoting trade in my State and growing opportunities for our exporters—Canada and Mexico are Arkansas's top trading partners by far. Arkansas goods and services are exported to 181 countries, but Canada and

Mexico combined for over one-third of our exports in 2017. Our exports to these two countries added \$2.1 billion to Arkansas's economy that year. Nearly 69,000 jobs in my State are dependent on trade with Canada, and another 41,000 jobs are affected by trade with Mexico. Arkansas exports about \$1.3 billion in goods to Canada and another \$182 million in services. I could go on, but we have already covered a lot of statistics here today.

It is important to remember that there are real people behind this data. They are the workers in the paper mills in South Arkansas, the employees of the steel mills in Northwest Arkansas, the family farmers producing rice in the delta, and the line workers at the poultry-processing plants in Northwest Arkansas.

These Arkansans, and many more, work in the industries that produce our top exports to Mexico and Canada. For them and countless others, the announcement that a trade agreement has been reached with Canada and Mexico was very welcome and promising news. Arkansas farmers, business leaders, and workers understand how vital it is to have free but also fair trade, particularly with our neighbors to the north and the south. It helps create the sense of certainty that has been sorely missing for our manufacturers, small businesses, and the agriculture industry.

For our agricultural community, it is particularly crucial that we push this agreement across the finish line. Our farmers face a very tenuous situation right now. Commodity prices are well below the cost of production. Farm incomes in 2018 dropped sharply again for the fifth consecutive year. Total farm debt has risen to levels not seen since the early 1980s. A rainy fall and spring have hampered planting season and, in the case of Arkansas, produced one of the worst floods in the State's history. All this combined has placed Arkansas's rural communities in dire conditions. Far too many family farms are barely hanging on, and, sadly, many more are filing for bankruptcy.

Arkansas has a diverse economy, ranging from aerospace and defense to steel production, to the world's largest retailer, but agriculture is by far our largest industry. It adds around \$16 billion to our economy every year and accounts for approximately one in every six jobs in Arkansas.

In my discussions with farmers on how we can help, the same mantra is often repeated: They prefer trade over aid. While they appreciate the President's efforts to ease the pain during these trade standoffs, what they really need are more markets in which to sell their products. They understand that increased trade is the way forward to create a better long-term outlook for their operations.

Our neighbors to the north and south are our natural allies and trading partners. The President's team worked hard to get Canada and Mexico to the

negotiating table to formalize a more mutually beneficial agreement. That hard work has paid off in the form of the USMCA. Now Congress has the responsibility to see it through to the end.

Fair trade agreements have become increasingly important to Arkansas's economy over the last half-century. As the world becomes more interconnected, access to global markets is necessary not just for the large corporations that call Arkansas home but also for small and medium-sized businesses that are looking to expand their operations and their footprints. With a level playing field, Arkansas's agriculture, manufacturing, and small businesses can compete with anyone around the globe. Let's help them take a giant step closer to that by swiftly approving USMCA.

Mr. HOEVEN. I would like to thank the Senator from Arkansas for his words and also his leadership in agriculture.

Now I turn to the Senator from Ohio, who I think is going to touch on some of the aspects that are beneficial for the manufacturing sector.

The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. PORTMAN. Thank you to my colleague from North Dakota. North Dakota has a lot of farmers and manufacturers. There is a lot of manufacturing in his State as well, and they never had a better friend. That is why he is so strong a supporter of this agreement. It makes a big difference.

My colleague from Arkansas talked about the fact that Arkansas's two largest trading partners are Canada and Mexico. It is the same for Ohio. China is actually kind of a distant third. These two countries are critical for our exports. That is why this agreement is so important.

I am a former trade lawyer. I also was the U.S. Trade Representative under George W. Bush. Now I am on the Finance Committee, which is the committee that handles these trade issues. I think having a balanced and healthy trade relationship is very important. We have to stand up for our country. We need to enforce these agreements we have. We also need to expand the exports because that is what creates jobs—by the way, better paying jobs. They pay about 16 percent more on average and have better benefits. That is why we need to be sure we have agreements like this one.

We have about 5 percent of the world's population and about 25 percent of the world's economy. We need to sell our stuff overseas. It gives us access to 95 percent of the consumers who live outside of our borders. Mexico and Canada, as I said, are our biggest trading partners. Thirty-nine percent of our exports go to Canada alone—twice the national average. All in all, Mexico and Canada now support more than 12 million jobs nationally, according to the U.S. Chamber of Commerce.

We all know the NAFTA agreement has to be updated. It is now 25 years

old, and it looks like it. It doesn't have a lot of things I would expect in any modern agreement, such as taking care of the digital economy. So much of our economy is now over the internet; yet there is nothing in this agreement that deals with that part of our economy.

It is more than just a name change. It does include a lot of different aspects. We put in more modern agreements that we don't have in the NAFTA.

Another is labor and environmental standards. Not only are they stronger, but they are enforceable under this new agreement. They are not enforceable under NAFTA.

Auto jobs have left the United States of America over the last 25 years. One reason this agreement is necessary is that the USMCA shifts more auto production back to the United States. My colleague from North Dakota talked about the manufacturing side. This is going to get U.S. automobile assembly lines humming again because if you want to get the better tariff treatment under the USMCA, car parts and cars have to have higher content from North America—that means from us. Under NAFTA, that requirement was 62.5 percent, and under USMCA, it is 75 percent. There is also a new provision where 70 percent of steel that is used in automobiles has to be North American steel. Both of these things help to ensure that we have more manufacturing jobs in Ohio and around the country.

American farmers, as we have heard earlier, are going to gain access to new markets in Canada and Mexico. That is why Ohio farm groups are for this. That is why, by the way, nearly 1,000 farm groups from around the country now—I didn't know there were 1,000 farm groups—have come out to support this agreement.

Small businesses in Ohio and around the country whose bottom line relies on these internet sales, internet commerce is going to have much more access to Canada and Mexico, thanks to these new digital economy provisions. So it kind of helps across the board.

By the way, these stronger labor standards in Mexico we talked about are going to help level the playing field in terms of labor because labor costs are less in Mexico, but it goes even further than that. It actually requires that 40 to 45 percent of a USMCA vehicle made in Mexico, or anywhere in North America, must be produced by workers making at least 16 bucks an hour.

This is kind of revolutionary. It is a different kind of thinking in a trade agreement. Frankly, it is something you would expect from a Democratic administration to put into an agreement, but it is in there, and it is going to help autoworkers in this country.

Because of all of these changes I have discussed—by the way, many of which, like the higher minimum wage or like the higher domestic content, have been advocated by Democrats in the past. That has been their approach to these

trade agreements, not Republicans so much, but because these provisions are so good for workers, I must tell you I am surprised—even amazed—to see so many of my Democratic colleagues not stand up to support this agreement because it has all of these things they have said they have wanted over the years, and they certainly don't like NAFTA. Many of them have campaigned against NAFTA for the past 25 years. In a way, if you vote against USMCA, you know what you are stuck with—NAFTA. So in a way, you are voting for NAFTA if you vote against USMCA.

That is the alternative here. It is a binary choice, as they say. It is either you are for this new agreement that is an improvement or you go back to the status quo, which is NAFTA.

So it will be interesting to see, but my hope is the media and others, outside groups, will hold people accountable and say: Why would you be against an agreement that is better, even if it is not perfect from your point of view?

By the way, no trade agreement is absolutely perfect. Every one of us would negotiate something slightly different. It is a question of trying to make sure you don't make the agreement, which is not perfect, the enemy of the good, and the good is to go to this new agreement.

There was an outside, independent study done by the International Trade Commission showing that 176,000 new jobs will be added to the U.S. economy just from this agreement alone. So this is better.

So the bottom line is, do we continue under the outdated NAFTA or do we adopt these new USMCA standards that will allow us to compete better in the global 21st century economy?

A vote against the USMCA, again, is a vote for the status quo, without enforceable labor and environmental standards, with a nonexistent digital economy provision, and with rules of origin that allow more automobiles and auto parts to be manufactured overseas instead of in America. USMCA addresses and solves all those problems.

I put together a little handy chart to talk about some of these specific provisions.

USMCA will create 176,000 new jobs. NAFTA? None.

Enforceable labor and environmental standards. USMCA, yes, checkmark, enforceable. Enforceable under NAFTA? No.

Rules for the internet economy, new rules, again, to help small businesses, internet economy, checkmark. NAFTA? No.

Seventy percent of the steel in vehicles has to be made in North America. That is a new provision. It is not in any other trade agreement, by the way. Yes on USMCA; no on NAFTA.

Finally, 40 to 45 percent of the vehicles must be made by workers earning at least 16 bucks an hour. NAFTA, no; USMCA, yes.

So it is pretty clear to me, if you actually are honest about this and you look at it objectively and you say here are these two opportunities, which way would you go?

So I hope my colleagues on the other side of the aisle take a look at this and apply logic and say: It might not be perfect. I might have wanted a little more here or there, but be sure that you are supporting what works for your workers.

If we can get this agreement passed, the President will sign it. It will make a difference for employees, for farmers, workers, service providers in my home State of Ohio and around the country.

Mr. HOEVEN. I want to thank the Senator from Ohio. I introduced him as the Senator from Ohio because that is what he is right now, but I could have also said that he is the former USTR, U.S. Trade Ambassador, so I guess I could have said Ambassador Portman, and he was also the Director of the Office of Management and Budget. So when he gets up and talks about the comparison of USMCA versus NAFTA, he certainly knows what he is talking about, and I appreciate his being here and the compelling case he makes based on many years of work and truly understanding these trade agreements and being part of developing them.

So, again, my thanks to the Senator from Ohio. I appreciate him very much.

Now I am going to turn to somebody who appreciates the farmer the way I do, and that is the junior Senator from Iowa.

Ms. ERNST. Thank you to the senior Senator from North Dakota for his great work in pulling us all together. A number of us on the floor really appreciate the agricultural sector. We heard from my senior Senator just a bit ago.

Why am I so enthused about the USMCA? It is because, in the great State of Iowa, one out of every five jobs is tied to trade.

Over 87,000—87,000—farms make Iowa our Nation's top egg, pork, corn, soybean, and ethanol producer.

With Canada and Mexico being two of our biggest trading partners, the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement—or what we have been talking about here, the USMCA—is a huge deal for the State of Iowa.

Last year alone, my home State of Iowa exported \$6.6 billion worth of products to just Canada and Mexico. That is more than we exported to our next 27 top export markets all combined—27 combined, and it still wasn't greater than what we send to Mexico and Canada.

This deal will allow those numbers to grow exponentially by creating new export opportunities for our dairy industry, greater access for our egg producers, and reducing nontariff trade barriers that previously hampered our exporting abilities.

So it is critical—it is critical—that we get the USMCA across the finish line, not just for the sake of getting a tremendous win for our agriculture

community but finalizing a deal that will impact the livelihoods of our hard-working Iowans and all Americans across the country.

Ninety-five percent of the world's population lives outside of the United States of America, which makes our exports all that more important.

Having USMCA in place means certainty—certainty in a time where prices have been low and markets have been eroded from other trade negotiations.

This trade deal preserves our duty-free access to Mexican and Canadian markets, which many of our ag producers and manufacturers benefit from.

I have heard from countless equipment dealers and processors all the way down to the farmers growing the crops and raising our hogs. Ratifying this agreement will be a shot of positive energy into their businesses, their homes, and to folks all across rural America.

When it comes to trade with our neighbors to the north and the south, it is simple. We need the USMCA passed through Congress as soon as possible.

It has already been ratified by Mexico; they are done. The deal is done with Mexico, and it looks like Canada is set to follow suit.

The USMCA was signed on November 30 of 2018. That is right—2018. That is 228 days ago—228 days. I would say it is about time that Speaker PELOSI and our friends in the House signal their full support for this agreement.

It is time to get moving. We have to get this deal done. We have to get it across the finish line. Iowa's farmers, manufacturers, and small businesses are counting on us to get this done.

With that, I would like to say: Go, USMCA. Thank you to the senior Senator from North Dakota for gathering us together. I think this is a really important topic for all of us to focus on.

Mr. HOEVEN. I want to thank the Senator from Iowa and turn to somebody who, although he is very young, has been working very hard for agriculture for a very long time, and that is the Senator from Kansas, who also happens to be our Ag Committee chairman.

Mr. ROBERTS. Madam President, I thank Senator HOEVEN for getting us together for a colloquy with everybody who is concerned about this.

This is what we do on the Agriculture Committee, working in a bipartisan way when we see an opportunity, and certainly we ought to seize this opportunity.

I thank the Senator from North Dakota for leading this. He is an outstanding champion on behalf of agriculture, and he is always riding the posse, which I truly appreciate.

I also thank Senator BRAUN from Indiana, a new and valued member of the Ag Committee, for pointing out some of the obstacles we face. Unfortunately, they tend to be on a partisan basis. There are extraneous things that

need to be talked about, and I know Senator PORTMAN just brought that up with his chart, but I thank him for his participation.

Senator GRASSLEY, who is a very valued member of the Ag Committee, chairman of the Finance Committee—and obviously that is the committee of jurisdiction—who has especially pointed out, and as Senator ERNST has pointed out, the value of agriculture to Iowa and, for that matter, all of the country.

Senator BOOZMAN, who talked about Arkansas, is a valued member of the committee as well, next to the chair in terms of seniority.

Senator PORTMAN, as has been pointed out, is the former Trade Representative. On the chart, he simply pointed out in detail why this new agreement is far superior to NAFTA and we are working with, as Senator GRASSLEY pointed out, working groups in the House, with our lead negotiator, and I hope that works out. I certainly hope it works out.

Senator ERNST has been an outstanding champion for farmers in Iowa and all around the country. She is on the committee and has compassion and also pointed out the need for certainty.

Now, since NAFTA was signed into law, the result has been that Canada and Mexico have been two of our strongest trading partners.

I worked on NAFTA back in the day when I was in the House and served as ranking member, and the Honorable Kika de la Garza was the chairman. We went all over the country working on NAFTA.

The result with that agreement—and every State could say the same thing, but we are talking about 110,000 jobs in Kansas. Those jobs are across all sectors of agriculture now, and many are tied to agriculture and the entire agriculture value chain. NAFTA secured greater market access for our farmers, our ranchers, our growers, everybody in between, and for our producers. Today, over one-quarter of our country's agriculture exports are destined for Canada and/or Mexico.

As with every trade agreement, there is always room for improvement. It has been pointed out by all of my colleagues that the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement—the acronym for that is USMCA. I did suggest it could also be for United States Marine Corps Always, but that is the acronym we are using. It has modernized the trade pact we have benefited from for over 20 years. The U.S. agriculture industry desperately needs this trade agreement now to offer greater certainty and predictability regarding demand in the marketplace, certainly in predictability.

That is what we promised in the farm bill, and we passed the farm bill in this body with 87 votes. That is a record vote, based on the premise that the most important thing we do is provide certainty and predictability for our farmers and ranchers and growers.

As chairman of the Senate Ag Committee, I have heard directly, personally, as all my colleagues have, from producers and the broader agriculture industry regarding our challenging farm economy.

Every day our farmers, ranchers, and growers experience incredible challenges, including weather variability, and that is putting it mildly. I do not know what we have done to Mother Nature for her to act in this fashion.

In Kansas, the wheat harvest is a month late, and farmers still can't get in their fields up in the northwest part, but, amazingly, the yield is pretty good; the protein is staying about the same; and we have seen a little bit—a little bit—of price recovery. We need a lot more.

The uncertainty regarding the U.S. trade policy has led some of our most important trading partners to turn to our competitors. That is sadly true. At a time when the U.S. agriculture industry is facing new trade retaliation threats on top of the challenging agriculture economy, we must offer greater certainty and predictability for the farmers and ranchers across the country.

I cannot emphasize enough how serious this is. This is the fourth or fifth year that we have experienced this situation. Some farmers and ranchers who produce—not all but some—are in a desperate situation.

Congressional passage of USMCA would be—will be—should be—a pivotal step toward restoring the United States as a reliable supplier, not to mention tangible benefits.

I urge my colleagues—especially in the House—to get together with Ambassador Lighthizer and work out these concerns that have been talked about—especially by Senator GRASSLEY—and to give fair and swift consideration to this new trade agreement. We must expand critical market access and create new trade opportunities for U.S. agriculture.

I again thank Senator HOEVEN for his leadership and for sponsoring this colloquy.

Mr. HOEVEN. I thank the Senator from Kansas and our Agriculture Committee chairman.

Madam President, I ask unanimous consent for up to an additional 3 minutes of time to allow the Senator from Colorado to make a few remarks, and then we would turn to the Senator from Vermont for his comments.

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

Mr. HOEVEN. Madam President, I turn to the Senator from Colorado.

Mr. GARDNER. Madam President, I thank our colleague from Vermont for the accommodation of this extra time.

USMCA is incredibly important to the State of Colorado. Colorado is a pro-trade State. We have about 750,000 trade-related jobs in Colorado. Of those 750,000 jobs, almost 250,000 are related to trade with Mexico and Canada. Nearly a quarter million of Colorado's

workers are there because of trade with Canada and Mexico. It is a nearly \$5 billion share of our economy—that is, the total number of goods, services, and exports to Canada and Mexico. That was a couple of years ago, so that number has obviously increased.

Of the potatoes Mexico imports from the United States, nearly half come from Colorado. If you look at beverages, 97 percent of the beverages Mexico imports come from Colorado. If you look at crowns, closures, seals, 96 percent of those items exported or imported by Mexico come from Colorado. If you look at miscellaneous leather products, the hides and other products that Mexico imports, 87 percent of them come from Colorado.

We know NAFTA has created thousands of jobs in Colorado. We know it has added thousands of dollars to people's incomes. We know USMCA is a better, stronger opportunity for us to gain even more jobs, more income, and more opportunity for the people of Colorado. So I thank Senator HOEVEN for bringing people together on the floor to talk about the importance of free trade and particularly the passage of USMCA.

I hope our colleagues in the House will hear this call to a brighter economic future, more trade opportunities, and greater U.S. leadership by moving the USMCA, adopting it, and putting it forward so the Senate can act on it and getting this agreement into law so we can actually once again start rebuilding opportunities with trade.

I am strongly supportive of this effort. It is good for Colorado, and it is good for this country.

I thank my colleague from North Dakota and my colleague from Vermont.

Mr. HOEVEN. Madam President, I thank the Senator from Colorado. Again, the message is clear: We need to pass USMCA, and we urge our colleagues not only in this Chamber but in the House to do that and get this done for our country, across all sectors of our economy.

With that, I turn to the Senator from Vermont and express my thanks and appreciation to him.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

DEATH OF JAMAL KHASHOGGI

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, the U.N. Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary killings, Ms. Agnes Callamard, recently released her report on the murder of Jamal Khashoggi after a 6-month investigation. I encourage everyone to read the report, and I want to share several of her findings.

First, Mr. Khashoggi was murdered and dismembered inside the Saudi consulate in Istanbul. It was an extrajudicial killing that violated numerous international laws, and for which the Government of Saudi Arabia is responsible.

Second, there is credible evidence warranting further investigation of the