

whatever the President announces this week falls short of what the American people are demanding, the Democrats will continue to press the issue.

Later tonight, I will join several of my Democratic colleagues on the floor for an extended debate on the issue of gun violence. Many of my colleagues have seen their communities torn apart by gun violence—some by horrific mass shootings, others by a relentless, daily stream. Many of them have worked for years to put common-sense gun safety measures before the Senate. Tonight, the Democrats will hold a forum to bring those stories to the Senate floor—the stories of families who have been shattered by gun violence and the stories of our constituents who demand that we take action.

My Republican colleagues, I hope, will listen closely and, more importantly, will join the Democrats in working to pass meaningful legislation.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Dakota.

UNITED STATES-MEXICO-CANADA TRADE AGREEMENT

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, I spent a lot of time talking to South Dakota farmers over the August break, and I can tell you that if there is one thing on farmers' minds right now, it is trade; it is markets; it is having a place to sell the things that we raise and grow. Farmers and ranchers have had a rough few years. Low commodity prices and low livestock prices, natural disasters, and protracted trade disputes have left our agricultural economy trailing behind our economy as a whole.

As farmers emphasized to me during August, one of the biggest things we can do to help our agricultural economy is to implement trade agreements that benefit American farmers and ranchers. The United States is currently involved in trade negotiations on multiple fronts—with the European Union, with China, with Japan, and with other Asian-Pacific countries.

Like many farmers and ranchers, I support the President's goal of addressing trade imbalances and securing more favorable conditions for American products abroad, but we need to conclude these agreements as soon as possible. The longer negotiations drag on, the tougher the situation for farmers, who face retaliatory tariffs as well as a lot of uncertainty about what markets are going to look like.

We have had some recent successes. In August, the administration announced a deal to increase U.S. beef sales to Europe. In May, the administration announced a deal with Japan to remove all remaining age restrictions on U.S. beef, giving American ranchers full access to the Japanese market for the first time in more than a decade. Yet that is just a tiny fraction of what needs to get done on the trade front when it comes to agriculture.

Every time I speak with the President and his administration, I empha-

size what South Dakota farmers have told me: We need to conclude negotiations on the various trade deals that we are working on, and we need to do it now. We need to open new markets, expand existing ones, and give farmers and ranchers certainty about what those markets are going to look like.

While we are still in negotiations on a number of agreements, one deal that we don't need to wait for is the United States-Mexico-Canada Free Trade Agreement. This agreement has already been fully negotiated by our three countries, and Congress can take it up at any point.

The United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement is a clear and significant win for our farmers and ranchers. Canada and Mexico are the No. 1 and No. 2 export markets for American food and agricultural products. This agreement will preserve and expand farmers' access to these critical markets and will give farmers certainty about what these markets will look like in the long term.

I am particularly pleased with the improvements the agreement makes for U.S. dairy producers. South Dakota has experienced a massive dairy expansion over the past few years, and this agreement will benefit U.S. dairy producers by substantially expanding market access in Canada, which is where U.S. dairy sales have been restricted. The U.S. International Trade Commission estimates that the agreement will boost U.S. dairy exports by more than \$277 million. The agreement will also expand market access for U.S. poultry and egg producers, and it will make it easier for U.S. producers to export wheat to Canada.

Of course, while I have been talking a lot about farmers, the benefits of the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement will not be limited to the agricultural industry. Virtually every sector of our economy will benefit from this agreement—from manufacturing to digital services, to the automotive industry. It will create 176,000 new U.S. jobs, will grow our economy, and will raise wages for workers.

The Republicans in the Senate are ready to consider the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement. We are just waiting for the House Democrats to stop threatening to oppose the agreement and to show a willingness to put it to an up-or-down vote in the House of Representatives.

The administration has made addressing the Democrats' concerns a priority throughout the negotiation process, and it seems to me that if you are a Democrat who is unhappy with the status quo, voting for the USMCA is the best way to fix it.

I am encouraged by the fact that the Democrats appear to be working with the administration to reach a resolution on this agreement, and I hope they will continue to work with the White House to bring this agreement to a vote as soon as possible in the House of Representatives. America's farmers

and ranchers need the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement. While it won't be a cure-all for all of the problems that are facing farm country, it will be a significant step forward.

Congress should pass this agreement as soon as possible and allow farmers and ranchers and the rest of the American economy to start realizing the benefits.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois.

REMEMBERING MARCA BRISTO

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, the disability rights movement is one of the great civil rights achievements of our time, and Chicago's Marca Bristo was that movement's Rosa Parks.

Marca was a visionary and inspiring leader, who helped change Chicago and change the world when it came to the rights of the disabled, and she was my friend.

Sadly, Marca died last week in her adopted hometown of Chicago at 66 years of age.

In typical Marca style, she worked right on up to the few days before her death, trying to bend the arc of history just a little more toward justice before she drew her last breath.

I was happy to join my colleague Senator TAMMY DUCKWORTH this week in sponsoring a resolution honoring Marca's life and work.

I would like to take a few moments on the floor today to remember this amazing woman.

While most Americans have never heard of Marca Bristo, few lives went untouched by her lifelong quest on behalf of people with disabilities. She was a nationally and internationally acclaimed leader in the disability rights movement.

She helped to write and to pass the Americans with Disabilities Act in 1990, which outlawed discrimination against the estimated one in four Americans with disabilities, and she spent the rest of her life making sure the ADA was faithfully implemented.

Along with leaders like Justin Dart, Marca changed the way Americans thought about disabilities. She persuaded us to view the disability experience as a civil rights issue, not just a medical issue.

To Marca's mind, what kept many people with disabilities from leading full lives was not their disability but the barriers they faced. What needed to change, she said, was not the person with disabilities but those obstacles that blocked their path. The problem was not that her wheelchair was too wide for certain doors; the problem was the doors were too narrow for her wheelchair. Remove the barriers, and people with disabilities can lead rich and full lives and make enormous contributions. That is part of what Marca taught me.

She was tough, smart, funny, determined, and fearless. She knew how to motivate others and how to build coalitions.

Her parents actually named her Marcia, but during her freshman year in college, a classmate called her Marca. She liked it, and it stuck.

She moved to Chicago and earned a nursing degree from Rush University College of Nursing in 1976.

In 1977, when Marca was 23 years old, working as a labor-delivery nurse at a Chicago hospital, she and her friend were sitting on the shore of Lake Michigan, when a dog grabbed her favorite pair of sandals and ran into the water with them. Marca dove in to retrieve her shoes, not realizing the water was shallow. She broke her neck and was paralyzed from the waist down for the rest of her life.

Because of her paralysis, she lost her job, her health insurance, her home, her car, and the ability to navigate the city she loved. She thought she would never work again, but luckily the director of Northwestern University's Prentice Women's Hospital thought otherwise and convinced her to return to nursing.

At one point, she attended a work conference in San Francisco and saw for the first time an abundance of curb cuts—curb cuts that enabled people with disabilities to cross the street. It was an eye-opener for Marca.

As she later wrote:

No longer did I see curbs or stairs or inaccessible buses and bathrooms as a problem around which I needed to navigate. Rather, I saw them as examples of societal discrimination—and felt a responsibility to get involved to help people with disabilities, in Illinois and beyond.

In 1980, Marca founded Access Living in Chicago, a nonprofit dedicated to helping people with disabilities live as independently as possible rather than warehoused in institutions.

Access Living led the fight to make public transportation in Chicago more accessible. Marca was not a shrinking violet. In 1984, she joined others, chaining themselves to Chicago Transit Authority buses. She ended up getting arrested, and they ended up filing a lawsuit in reply against the transit agency.

Her determination led to the installation of wheelchair lifts and critical changes to CTA buses and rail stations. Access Living became a disability leadership model for other cities around the country and around the world.

In 1992, Marca cofounded the National Council on Independent Living, which she led for many years.

In 1993, President Clinton named her to head the National Council on Disability. She was the first person with a disability ever to hold that post, and she held it until 2002.

She was elected president of the U.S. International Council on Disabilities and traveled around the world advocating for people with disabilities and their families.

She participated in the negotiation for the U.N. Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, a global accord based on the Americans with

Disabilities Act. More than 160 nations have signed that treaty, including the United States. Sadly, this Senate has failed to ratify that treaty. I worked hours and hours with Marca to try to win the votes in the Senate for this bipartisan measure to help people with disabilities. We even brought former U.S. Senator Bob Dole, a World War II hero and a father of the ADA, to sit on the floor of the Senate when we cast the votes on this treaty. Unfortunately, it did not pass.

Marca called July 26, 1990, the day President George H.W. Bush signed the Americans with Disabilities Act, "Our Independence Day."

On that day, she said:

This ragtag army of people who couldn't see, hear, walk and talk did what everyone said couldn't be done. We passed the most comprehensive civil rights law since the passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act.

In a 2015 video interview for Rush University Medical Center, celebrating the 25th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act, Marca said: "The law for the first time enshrined in federal law that disability is a normal part of the human condition, and the world needed to change."

In July 2017, days before another ADA anniversary, Marca was again fighting for justice. She was 1 of more than 60 who were arrested for protesting against the proposed deep cuts in the Medicaid Program that had been included in a Republican effort to repeal the Affordable Care Act.

As the Capitol Police wheeled her away, Marca raised a clenched fist and smiled. That is how I am going to remember her: optimistic, determined, even against long odds.

Days after her arrest, another American hero with a disability, John McCain, came to this floor and in the well of this Senate, shocked his party and the Nation by becoming the deciding vote against the repeal of the Affordable Care Act. I like to think my colleague from Arizona, John McCain, saw in Marca Bristo and her determined friends the same courage he had witnessed so often in our military.

My wife Loretta and I extend our condolences to Marca's husband of 32 years, Bob Kettlewell; their two children, Samuel and Madeline; her granddaughter, who was born in June; to Marca's sister Gail; and to her countless friends and colleagues.

Marca made the lives of hundreds of millions of people better. I am going to miss her warm smile, her wise advice, her vision, and her courage.

EMERGENCY FUNDING

Madam President, I rise in opposition today to President Trump's continued efforts to move funding from our military in order to build his beloved wall on our southern border, and I rise as well in defense of the powers given to Congress in article I of the Constitution.

Last week, the President announced he was taking \$3.6 billion from America's military to build his wall. He did

so by canceling 127 military construction projects around the world and in 26 States and territories. Already, President Trump had taken \$2.5 billion from our military earlier this year. Last week's decision brings the total to over \$6 billion—\$6 billion of investments in our American military and national security that the President of the United States has diverted so he can have a bragging point in the reelection campaign about his beloved wall.

This decision has rippled across the country and the world.

Remember the terrible damage Hurricane Maria did in Puerto Rico, which is still being repaired? Our military prioritized \$400 million to rebuild National Guard facilities and the school for military children there. With the stroke of a pen, and without the approval of Congress, the President took away these funds.

Joint Base Andrews in Maryland needed a new childcare facility for military families. Some of the rooms in that current facility have been closed due to mold, which has created overcrowding. There are 130 children on a waiting list to get into this facility. Their parents are paying for expensive off-base childcare. It is unacceptable.

So Congress, on behalf of these military families at Joint Base Andrews in Maryland, approved the money to upgrade the childcare center. Once again, with the stroke of a pen, President Trump took the military family childcare funds for his almighty wall.

Military children at Fort Campbell, KY, the home State of the Republican majority leader of the Senate, are forced to use overcrowded classrooms and a cafeteria so small that students are often shipped off to the library to eat.

With the same stroke of a pen, \$62 million that Congress authorized for Senator McCONNELL's home State of Kentucky to fix the problem are gone, headed to the border of the United States for the President to be able to boast at a rally.

As if these stories weren't troubling enough, the Air Force is also sounding the alarm. A leaked internal review by the Air Force warns that President Trump's decision to cancel 51 Air Force projects poses serious national security risks to our country.

Imagine if the shoe were on the other foot and the President were a member of my party, the Democratic Party. What would we be hearing from the Republican side of the aisle?

One of the projects that has been canceled for the Air Force by the President's effort to divert military funds to his wall is Incirlik Air Base in Turkey. They needed an upgrade for security on their main gate. The Air Force says that without this project, the base is "vulnerable to hostile penetration in the midst of contingency operations and an increased terrorist threat."

For goodness' sake. The President is building a wall in the middle of a desert that is not solving the problem