

can. I understand that peanut allergies are a real problem around the country and around the world for a lot of people. But advances in research that is going on right now—right now—can make sure we break through and that all who want to can enjoy the value and the taste of those wonderful peanuts. I am not going to go through specifics. I could name all manner of products. I won't do that here today, but I thank you for this opportunity.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

ENERGY POVERTY

Mr. BARRASSO. Madam President, I come to the floor today to discuss the global fight to end poverty and specifically the problem of energy poverty.

The numbers paint a very grim picture. Worldwide, 840 million people are living without electricity. They can't cook or heat their homes safely or reliably. In fact, nearly 3 billion people—3 billion people worldwide—still rely on wood and waste for household energy.

What should the United States do to help? First and foremost, I believe we should push multilateral development banks, like the World Bank, to invest in affordable energy projects, which will help these people. The World Bank's mission is to lift people out of poverty—to help lift people out of poverty. That is their mission. Specifically, it seeks to end extreme poverty while promoting shared prosperity.

For 75 years, the United States has been working with the World Bank to help developing countries grow. The United States remains the World Bank's largest contributor. Every U.S. dollar at the World Bank should make a difference for people in the developing world.

The World Bank's new policies, however, lead me to call for a review by the United States of how U.S. dollars are being used. Several years ago, the World Bank decided to stop financing certain projects—specifically, oil, gas, and coal projects. I am concerned the World Bank is now blocking affordable energy development—energy that is needed to make a positive difference for so many people in the developing world. Traditional fuels are a vital tool for escaping energy poverty. Yet, with the policy change in the World Bank, only renewable energy projects qualify for funding. It seems that the World Bank is putting its liberal political agenda ahead of our anti-poverty mission.

The question is, Does the World Bank still want to help the people living in poor nations today? That is the question. If so, they should be helping with the use of abundant and affordable energy resources. If not, then I think the United States must reevaluate our support for the World Bank.

Here is a case in point: The Bank restricts the financing of high-efficiency power stations fueled by coal. Last fall, for example, the World Bank failed to honor its commitment to the country

of Kosovo. The Bank pulled its funding from Kosovo's state-of-the-art, coal-fired powerplant—state of the art—needed in Kosovo. Kosovo faces an energy security barrier to grow. They don't have enough energy to grow the way they are prepared to. Kosovo has the fifth largest coal reserves in the world. Kosovo desperately needs to retire its older facility.

I saw this firsthand last month when I was visiting members of the Wyoming National Guard stationed in northern Kosovo. This decision by the World Bank is simply unacceptable.

What are other countries doing? China and Russia, meanwhile, are dramatically increasing their global investment in identical carbon-based energy projects. The World Bank is saying: Go ask China. Go ask Russia. South Africa, for example, is now working with China's development bank on its coal-fired powerplant. There are serious concerns when our allies work with China and Russia. These include lower standards, dependence on these countries, and undue political influence.

A number of Members in the Senate share my concern. On Thursday, I led a group of a dozen Senators in urging the World Bank to immediately lift these harmful restrictions. My letter to the President of the World Bank, President David Malpass, was cosigned by Senators BOOZMAN, CAPITO, COTTON, CRAMER, CRUZ, ENZI, HOEVEN, JOHNSON, KENNEDY, MURKOWSKI, and THUNE. Together, we are pressing the World Bank to recommit to an "all of the above" energy strategy. Developing countries desperately need affordable, reliable energy.

We say in our letter:

People living in poor and developing nations want and need a stable energy supply. They are looking for power generation that provides energy security, helps create jobs, and improves their lives.

People back home in Wyoming know firsthand the benefits of developing abundant energy resources. The United States is a top global energy producer. Wyoming has played a key role in this success. We have produced our way to a booming U.S. economy, and we have created millions of new jobs along the way. People who are struggling worldwide to survive and thrive in developing countries deserve that same opportunity. As an energy powerhouse, America can help empower our allies and our energy exports.

Global philanthropist Bill Gates said: "Increasing access to electricity is critical to lifting the world's poor out of poverty. Let me repeat. 'Increasing access to electricity is critical to lifting the world's poor out of poverty.'"

Ultimately, the solution to energy poverty doesn't lie in limiting options but in using all available options. In pursuit of its mission, the World Bank must embrace, not exclude, abundant, affordable energy resources.

Let's work together to end energy poverty now for the 840 million people

on the planet living without electricity.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

UNITED STATES-MEXICO-CANADA TRADE AGREEMENT

Mr. ROBERTS. Madam President, about a month ago there was a headline in one of the publications that people pay attention to that read: "Senate Republicans Amp Up Pressure for an USMCA Vote." USMCA, by the way, is an acronym for the new trade agreement between Mexico, Canada, and the United States. I initially thought it was "United States Marine Corps Always," but that is not the case. About nine of us came to the floor and pointed out this was imperative, and if we were going to have a new trade agreement to replace NAFTA, if we could at least get some price recovery and also make some progress with regard to Canada and Mexico—historically great trading partners—it might be a good thing to get the USMCA passed. That was a month ago.

We were assured, at that particular time, by folks over in the House of Representatives—our colleagues over there—that they would do everything in their power to see if we could get it done. It is not done. Still, it is not done. Still, farmers, ranchers, growers, and everybody connected with agriculture, and, for that matter, trade, certainly have been waiting and waiting. Times in farm country, as I think most people know, are pretty rough these days. So at least passing USMCA would be something everybody could agree to.

I rise in support of the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement again—1 month later. It is time to move forward and pass this important legislation now. "Now," that is my acronym for "right away," "yesterday."

As chairman of the Senate Agriculture Committee, I want to talk about not only my producers in Kansas but all producers throughout these United States and across the country. Time and again, we have asked why there is a delay. Farmers tell me, time and again, they wonder what on Earth is going on back there. Well, that is obvious to everybody, with the "i" word being considered over in the House, but even with that, this is a situation where, if that were brought up to a vote, both the administration and House Members—both sides of the aisle—it would pass, more so especially since our Trade Ambassador, Robert Lighthizer, has been working with my colleagues across the aisle over there in an effort to settle labor issues and also environmental concerns.

I have been down that road before with the Honorable Kika de la Garza, the late Kika de la Garza, but a wonderful man who was chairman of the House Agriculture Committee. I was the ranking member and then became the chairman. We worked on NAFTA, writing that bill. We would revert to that bill, but after months and months, there was finally an agreement between Canada, Mexico, and the United States. We were ready to do this, and it had to go to the House of Representatives. Ambassador Lighthizer and Bob—he used to work for Bob Dole, a good friend of mine—had been working with Democrats over time on these two issues. He tells me he is pretty close to a deal—except we are not. Now, Ambassador Lighthizer, on behalf of the administration, is not going to send this deal, if you will, this trade agreement, to the House unless there is a clear intention that it will be brought up. He doesn't want to be held hostage. So the House has to move.

I want to continue to point out that USMCA, this new trade agreement, will not only increase market access for farmers and provide new opportunities for dairy, poultry, for egg producers, for all the commodities we talk about—wheat, corn, et cetera—but it will also address longstanding nontariff barriers that will help our Kansas farmers export wheat to Canada.

That used to be the case with Mexico. The Kansas winter wheat, once harvested, would get on the Kansas City railroad, down to Mexico. They would sell the wheat to Mexico, where they sorely needed it. It was a very good business trade agreement. That has pretty much dried up.

Let me go back to 2017. At that particular time, 110,000 Kansas jobs were supported by trade with Canada and Mexico, and, I am sure, the neighboring States are even equal to that or much more than that.

While many of those jobs are spread across all sectors of the economy, many are tied to the agriculture value chain; that is, farmers, ranchers, and growers, to the consumer.

In total, Kansas exports \$4 billion of products to Canada and Mexico each year—\$800 million from agriculture alone. It is nearly impossible for me to overstate the importance of this trade deal to my home State of Kansas. We are not going to experience price recovery in farm country because of the supply-demand situation worldwide, and we are in a lot of trouble in farm country. The least we could do is consider USMCA, where we know we have the votes to pass it in both Chambers, both in the House and the Senate.

In fact, the call for Congress to get moving on this trade deal has united more people from different political and professional backgrounds than almost any other issue in recent memory, including organized labor. I recently started a web series, if you will, "Trade Tuesday," to give a platform to the many constituents who have voiced

their support to me by saying: "Pat, where on Earth is the UMCSA bill?" We have featured farmers and manufacturers from around Kansas, including Rich Felts. Rich Felts is a great friend of mine, a farmer from Southeast Kansas, and the president of the Kansas Farm Bureau. Rich hit the nail right on the head. He said:

We are an exporting State. We produce much more than we are ever going to consume [in Kansas], and if we want to grow our economy, specifically our economy in the State, we have to export the excess commodity. I think it is easy to say we want trade, we don't want aide, and this is going to be a step in that direction if we can get this passed by Congress.

I could not agree more with Rich on the importance of this trade deal to farmers and producers in Kansas, but it is not only the agriculture industry that is interested in getting USMCA across the finish line. We have also featured Jason Cox, the president of Cox Machine, Inc., a small aerospace company based in Wichita, KS—typical of the small business community of my State. He recently said:

Trade is very important to our business, both on the raw material supply side as well as the selling side. This USMCA is important for us to help lower the cost of raw material that we buy and pass that savings along to our customers so we can get more work and produce more goods [and also jobs].

Look, my colleagues, it has been nearly a year since President Trump and the leaders of Mexico and Canada signed this new trade agreement. It was November 30, 2018. We are running out of time to get this deal done for folks like Rich and Jason and the many other workers whose livelihoods depend upon trade.

There are deadlines. If we get past the deadline, we will go back to the original NAFTA bill, which—as I look back in my public career, I was happy to work with Kika de la Garza, as I said—the former chairman of the House Ag Committee, and he helped me to write NAFTA at that particular time. As a result, the ag sector has grown by leaps and bounds in not only producing enough food and fiber and other products for our consumers but also for a troubled and hungry world.

We need this trade agreement. I sincerely hope my friends in the House can quickly come to an agreement with the administration so that we can all do what is right by our constituents and get this bill passed this year.

I would point out that the ag chairman today in the House is COLLIN PETERSON. He is a veteran. He is a friend of mine. MIKE CONAWAY is the ranking member—same thing. They are for USMCA. It is bipartisan in the Ag Committee over there.

I would also give a shout-out to Robert Lighthizer, who is our Ambassador, who has been meeting constantly day in and day out—trying to iron out any labor or environment portions of this trade agreement where we have some holdup.

We are not going to go anywhere if we continue to insist on these kinds of

requirements. You know, these are sovereign countries. These are our neighbors. For us to try to dictate labor standards and environmental standards for them is a little much, but I understand that is what we have to do.

I don't know, here, what more we can do. I can come to the floor every day. I can just say that we had 9 Senators here before. I think we could get a mutual agreement to say: Hey, let's get this done. Let's separate it from all of the goings-on that are happening in the House of Representatives today.

I hope Speaker PELOSI—she knows about this. California depends on this big time, and, as Speaker of the entire United States—I am not trying to lecture her or point fingers at her, but she knows exactly what the situation is. If she would just send a signal to Ambassador Lighthizer and we would send that trade pack up and we could get a vote, I think it would pass overwhelmingly, and at least we would have something we could claim we are doing in behalf of our farmers, our ranchers, our growers, and everybody who is supported by the agriculture industry.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia.

PENSIONS

Mr. MANCHIN. Madam President, I come again to speak about what I think of the inequities and unfairness in the system that we have to American workers.

American workers, businesses, and the economy here in the United States are the envy of the world and have been for quite some time. Throughout the history of our country, our citizens have believed that through hard work and dedication, they could achieve the American dream. Unfortunately, that is not always the case, as we know.

Millions of Americans worked hard, played by the rules, and trusted the companies they worked for to keep their end of the bargain. That bargain is their pension. These pensions are modest and what millions of Americans plan to use when they retire in the twilight of their lives.

But for 1.5 million Americans, that security has been pulled out from under them. Why, after working hard for years and forgoing a portion of their paychecks, which they have invested—this is their money matching their employers' for their pension—have they either lost or gotten their pensions cut in half? The answer is the current state of bankruptcy laws.

How does this happen? Every payday, 10.6 million Americans put a portion of their paycheck into a pension account with a promise and trust that it will be there when they retire. These same people forgo pay raises, bonuses, and personal retirement accounts because they believe their pensions will be there until needed.

Unfortunately, that trust is often broken when investment firms swoop in during the bankruptcy process. They cherry-pick at the remains of a company, cannibalizing its most lucrative