

The unanimous Senate vote for expanded oversight and firm responses to Beijing was welcomed news on the streets of Hong Kong, not because the U.S. Senate or international nonprofits or anybody else is ginning up these protests, as Beijing wants people to believe, but because those speaking out for freedom recognize a friend of freedom when they see one.

It has been funny to see how invested Beijing is in these conspiracy theories that this organic protest movement is actually the work of shadowy puppeteers. Just a few days ago, the Chinese Communist Party's Foreign Ministry took the panicked and laughable step of "sanctioning" several American nonprofits and NGOs, such as the International Republican Institute, the National Democratic Institute, and the National Endowment for Democracy. Like I said, it is laughable. I admire the heck out of these organizations, but they aren't exactly in the business of commanding millions of people from Hong Kong to Beirut, to Baghdad, to Tehran to take to the streets. They are not that good.

Here is the business they are in: speaking up for the timeless and universal principles of basic human freedom. They help keep the torch lit. It is the brave souls around the world who want better lives for themselves and their children who pick up the ball and run with it for themselves.

The junior varsity tantrum that Beijing is throwing against these U.S.-based organizations is literally comical. It puts the Communist Party's hypersensitivity on full display. It is the same flailing that we see from other regimes from Moscow to Tehran, driven by the same aggressive, authoritarian instincts that push social media propaganda, street corner surveillance, police violence, and the modern-day gulags where China is imprisoning and brutalizing the Uighur people. These are the forces history never judges kindly. I am proud of the people of Hong Kong. I am proud of the Senate's latest action to support them, and I am proud to continue standing alongside them in their journey to true self-determination.

#### APPROPRIATIONS

Mr. President, nearly every day I have come to the floor to talk about the key pieces of legislation that we will only be able to complete with bipartisan cooperation—essential things like funding for the entirety of our Federal Government, something we have to do, including funding for our men and women in uniform; the money for the tools and the training and the weapons that our volunteer servicemembers need to complete their missions; things like the National Defense Authorization Act, which Congress has passed every single year, always on a bipartisan basis, for the last 58 years. This is literally the bill that reauthorizes the U.S. military. It could not be more basic or fundamental.

So it is dismaying that my Democratic colleagues have seen fit to hold

these basic duties hostage for the sake of picking fights with the White House, for advancing a partisan domestic agenda. It is disappointing that Speaker PELOSI and the Democratic leader have abandoned their own written promises that they would not make our bipartisan appropriations processes conditioned on poison pills, policy riders, or changes to Presidential transfer authorities. All those commitments were made in the summer. Even though they put that in writing, they have chosen to shoehorn partisan demands right back into the process. So we are stalled. We are stalled because the agreement we all reached in the summer has not been honored by the other side.

Today I want to keep this really simple. The Senate's dispensation on that Hong Kong legislation proves that we can still work together when our core principles and our national interest are at stake. Of course, those things are exactly what is at stake with defense funding and the NDAA. So it is way past time—we are in December—to get serious.

Chairman SHELBY and Chairwoman LOWEY have agreed on subcommittee allocations. Chairman INHOFE and Senator REED have made strides on our bipartisan NDAA. I would implore my Democratic friends: Please stop gambling our national security on the roulette wheel of domestic politics. Please stop that. Stop putting political theater ahead of our troops.

We all know this is a heated political moment, but domestic politics do not excuse our men and women in uniform from doing their duties. So they cannot excuse our Democratic colleagues from doing theirs. Our servicemembers need Congress to have their backs. We can only fund the government if it is bipartisan. We can only pass an NDAA if it is bipartisan.

The roadmaps are in hand. We have the same traditions that have yielded 58 bipartisan NDAAAs in a row, and we have the bipartisan agreement that everyone signed just a few months ago when Speaker PELOSI and the Democratic leader promised in writing they wouldn't throw partisan wrenches into appropriations.

Our country can't afford for the Democrats to obsess over impeachment and obstruct everything else. Look, let's use these roadmaps. Let's get these things accomplished for the American people.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### 5G TECHNOLOGY

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, 4G technology is pretty amazing. When I talk

about 4G technology, that stands for fourth generation. On your smartphone, it might say LTE, but it is the fourth generation of technology that we have available to us on our wireless devices. We can FaceTime with family members across the country, order dinner or groceries without leaving our couches, watch a football game on the go with our phones, adjust the heat in our houses before we actually get home, carry around an entire library on a tablet the size of one small book, deposit a check without actually visiting the bank, and the list goes on.

As amazing as 4G technology is, it can't hold a candle to 5G, or fifth generation technology. 5G mobile broadband technology will deliver speeds that will be up to 100 times faster than what today's technology can deliver. Think about that—downloads that will be 100 times faster than what we have today. It will be vastly more responsive than 4G technology. It will be able to connect 100 times the number of devices that can be connected with 4G. That is pretty hard to imagine, really. Our phones and computers today seem pretty fast and responsive, but 5G will be much, much faster.

While that will make it even easier to do the things we do today, like check our email or stream our favorite shows, the biggest benefits of 5G will lie in the other technologies it will enable. For example, 5G will have the potential to pave the way for the widespread adoption of precision agriculture, which uses tools like robotics and remote monitoring to help farmers manage their fields and boost their crop yields. The U.S. Department of Agriculture estimates that precision agriculture will reduce farmers' operational costs by up to \$25 per acre and increase farmers' yields by up to 70 percent by the year 2050.

5G will pave the way for automated vehicles, which will have the potential to dramatically reduce traffic injuries and fatalities. There are 37,000 people lost every year on America's highways due to traffic accidents. Over 90 percent of those are as a result of human error—driving while under the influence, driving while distracted. 5G technology and the enablement of automated vehicles will go a long way toward saving lives on America's highways.

It will facilitate surgical innovations and new ways to treat chronic illnesses or heal injuries and so much more.

The technology for 5G is already here. Several cities around the United States, including my hometown of Sioux Falls, have already unveiled limited 5G networks, but there is more work to do before we all can start to see the benefits of 5G on our phones.

The widespread deployment of 5G will require two things: adequate spectrum and adequate infrastructure. While 4G relies on traditional cell phone towers, 5G technology will also require small antennas called small

cells that can often be attached to existing infrastructure like utility poles or buildings.

Earlier this year, I introduced legislation called the STREAMLINE Act to make it easier for companies to deploy these small cells so that we can get the infrastructure in place for 5G technology. I have also spent a lot of time focusing on securing adequate spectrum for 5G.

Last year, the President signed into law my bipartisan bill called the MOBILE NOW Act. It was legislation that I introduced to help secure adequate spectrum and to facilitate next-generation infrastructure. Tomorrow, in my role as chairman of the Commerce Subcommittee on Communications, Technology, Innovation and the Internet, I will be chairing a hearing looking at the progress that has been made in implementing the MOBILE NOW Act. We have a great slate of witnesses testifying tomorrow, including Sioux Falls Mayor Paul TenHaken, who has driven the implementation of advanced mobile broadband technology in Sioux Falls, SD.

The MOBILE NOW Act has helped us make progress toward the deployment of 5G, particularly in identifying licensed spectrum that can be used to support 5G deployment in more rural areas of the country.

MOBILE NOW also recognized the critical role that unlicensed spectrum plays in the development of 5G and in the larger communications landscape. Wi-fi operating on unlicensed spectrum will have an increasing role as we continue to connect more devices in the 5G era.

There is more work to be done, though. While we have made good progress on securing low- and high-band spectrum, China and South Korea are ahead of us in opening up mid-band spectrum for 5G. We don't want to lose out to China and South Korea on 5G, so we need to substantially increase the amount of mid-band spectrum available to U.S. companies.

Senator WICKER and I recently introduced legislation to facilitate the rapid acquisition of mid-band spectrum. Our 5G Spectrum Act would bring a substantial amount of mid-band spectrum to market for U.S. companies ready to deploy robust 5G networks.

In addition to fostering tremendous technological breakthroughs in everything from agriculture to energy, 5G has the potential to add \$500 billion to the economy and to create literally millions of new jobs. But in order to achieve those economic benefits, we need to stay at the head of the 5G revolution.

The United States lagged behind other countries in deploying 2G and 3G technology, which had real economic consequences. Europe, for example, took the lead in 2G and cornered most of the market in sales of networking equipment and telecom hardware.

As 4G emerged, however, the U.S. wireless industry stepped forward, in-

vesting billions in 4G deployment. The government also took steps to support the wireless industry, freeing up spectrum and making it easier to deploy the necessary infrastructure. That is what we have to do again today. If we want to stay at the head of the race to 5G, the government needs to make sure that wireless companies have access to the necessary spectrum and the ability to efficiently deploy small cell infrastructure.

We are right on the edge of the 5G revolution, and I am confident that the United States can lead the world in 5G, just like we did with 4G. We just need to take the last few steps to enable widespread 5G deployment.

I look forward to talking with individuals on the frontlines of 5G deployment at the hearing tomorrow. I will continue to work with my colleagues to ensure that both the spectrum and the infrastructure are in place for 5G technology.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Democratic leader is recognized.

#### IMPEACHMENT

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, yesterday afternoon, the majority on the House Intelligence Committee released a report on the evidence it has examined thus far in the impeachment inquiry into President Trump. The report asserted that the inquiry has “uncovered a months-long effort by President Trump to use the powers of his office to solicit foreign interference on his behalf in the 2020 election,” going on to say that the “President placed his own personal and political interests above the national interests of the United States.”

Those are extremely serious charges, and the conduct they describe is undoubtedly worthy of congressional investigation, which is precisely what the House impeachment inquiry is designed to do.

Whatever your party affiliation, it is up to us in Congress—and particularly in the Senate—to examine the evidence, remain impartial, and treat this matter with the seriousness it deserves. But at the moment, too many Members of the President’s party are stretching the bounds of truth in an attempt to defend the President’s behavior. Certain Members on the other side have parroted the fiction invented by Vladimir Putin’s intelligence services that Ukraine, not just Putin, interfered in the 2016 elections. One Member repeated this falsehood, recanted on

live television, and then went back to making similar comments a few days later.

Yesterday, Leader McCONNELL, when asked to set the record straight, said that it was a matter for the intelligence committees to look into.

Well, Leader McCONNELL, the intelligence committees have looked at it. In fact, according to reports, the Republican-led Senate Intelligence Committee investigated the allegations that Ukraine interfered in the 2016 election and found no evidence to support the claims. The Republican-led Intelligence Committee found no evidence, and Leader McCONNELL and so many of our Republican friends, in febrile obeisance to Donald Trump and his falsehoods and lies, have refused to even rebut that.

It is a dark day for America when a foreign leader who is our enemy can spread a false truth and is either defended or there is a lack of rebuttal from our Republican colleagues. What the heck is going on here in this America?

David Hale, the No. 3 official at President Trump’s State Department, was asked by Senator MENENDEZ yesterday whether he was aware of any evidence of Ukrainian interference in 2016. He said: I am not. He was not aware. Fiona Hill, another Trump appointee and a former NSC official, testified under oath that it was “a fictional narrative.”

There is no doubt that the idea of Ukrainian interference in 2016 is a hoax perpetrated by Putin’s intelligence services, echoed by FOX News and acolytes of President Trump’s, who similarly have shown no regard for truth—none.

The fact that Republican Senators are repeating and amplifying this fiction or playing coy about it, as Leader McCONNELL is, is just wrong for America, wrong for the future of our country—a turning point, a dark point, in our history. And in my view, it shows the extreme depths—the febrile depths—to which certain Members on the other side will stoop to provide cover to a President accused of serious wrongdoing—a President who almost no American believes is credible any longer.

#### APPROPRIATIONS

Mr. President, on another matter where we could use some bipartisanship, in 16 days, funding for the government will expire. We have several important pieces in place to avoid a shutdown, including the recent agreement on allocations known as 302(b)s. Several sticking points remain, but overall, this is good news because I believe, left to our own devices, Congress could work through the final issues and make sure the government stays open.

However, a report came out yesterday suggesting President Trump may refuse to sign any funding agreement without securing funding for his border wall first. If all of this seems a little familiar, it is because it is. Nearly a