

the implementing legislation and put it to a vote on the floor of the House. I think it would pass with a large bipartisan majority. Then and only then can we take up that legislation here in the Senate, which, I believe, would pass with a large bipartisan majority. We are ready to go.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nebraska.

Mr. SASSE. Mr. President, farmers and ranchers are in a tough spot. There are a lot of families who are on the edge of bankruptcy in my State and in ag country more broadly. As we get closer to Christmas and to the new year without having a trade deal with Canada and Mexico, the situation is getting bleaker.

Let's be blunt about this. By needlessly stonewalling the USMCA trade agreement, Speaker NANCY PELOSI and the House Democrats are taking Nebraska's agriculture hostage. This is petty, stupid politics at its worst.

The USMCA trade deal is a free-trade win for our farmers and ranchers, and they desperately need this win right now. With hard work and grit, Nebraskans have cultivated one of the most powerful agricultural economies in the history of the world. We literally feed the world, and we do it with free trade because we grow so much more food than we could ever consume. We need export markets, and lots of people around the world want to be consuming our ag products.

It is pretty simple: Trade with Canada and Mexico is a win-win-win. In 2018, Mexico and Canada bought more than \$40 billion worth of American agricultural products. The U.S. International Trade Commission expects the USMCA to increase that trade by more than \$33 billion. The USMCA trade deal is designed to reinforce those partnerships in ways that make sense for an economy that has changed a lot since NAFTA was passed in the 1990s.

In the 1990s, "Seinfeld" was still on TV; we still watched movies on VHS tape; and we took our pictures with these things of which the pages probably don't know—cameras that had film. I will be honest. At my house, we still watch "Seinfeld," but we have happily moved on from VHS tapes. My teenage daughters set us up on Hulu streaming, but I can't make the remote work.

Over the last 20 years, we have seen a massive digital revolutionary change in nearly every sector of our economy. Farmers are using new tech to increase our productivity and to get more out of the most fertile land on God's green Earth than people have ever assumed possible. The USMCA trade deal makes that kind of basic improvement in our trading relationships with our neighbors, and we need that in this rapidly changing, evolving, and developing economy. For example, it scraps the old rules about importing cars that still have cassette tape players. CHUCK GRASSLEY, apparently, still has a car

that has a cassette tape player, but he is proud of it, so we won't make fun of him here.

Passing the USMCA would secure long-term stability in our trade agreements with our partners across North America, and it would also send a signal to other potential partners around the world that the United States is open for business. We need to bring Japan, the European Union, and others to the negotiating table, and passing the USMCA would strengthen our position significantly in setting up those trade agreements. Time is running out.

If we don't pass the USMCA this year, we are going to send a very different signal to our potential partners. If Speaker PELOSI and the House Democrats can't get their act together on the USMCA, they will be telling the whole world that we may or may not be open for business—it all depends on short-term political posturing. That is the message they are sending now, and that is the message that might be cemented if this calendar year ends without our passing the USMCA. Try running a convenience store like that, and you will be out of business in a month.

A lot of folks in San Francisco and New York City may not think much about beans and corn prices, but every farmer and rancher in Nebraska is beyond baffled that this no-brainer trade deal hasn't been passed yet. It is simply in the best long-term interests of everyone involved in this conversation. This is not something that should be slipping beyond this year; this is something that should pass now. We should call the vote on Christmas morning if that is what it takes. The Congress should not be leaving DC without passing the USMCA.

Time is running out, and we don't want to let our farmers and ranchers face 2020 with the uncertainty and the confusion they now feel. These Nebraskans want to do business; they want to trade; and we want to win.

Congress is the place where Americans deliberate about the long-term challenges we need to face for the future of our country, but instead of deliberation, right now what they see when they turn on their TVs or pick up their newspapers is just vicious partisanship and short-term posturing. The American people deserve better than this.

The clown show in the House of Representatives shouldn't bring everything to a grinding halt. It shouldn't stop us from doing right for farmers and ranchers. The USMCA trade agreement would pass by large majorities if introduced on the House floor, and I speculate that it would get between 85 and 90 votes on this floor. Obviously, we can't take it up until the House votes. The House would pass it with a big majority. That means only NANCY PELOSI stands in the way of USMCA's certainty for the world's greatest producers. Everyone knows this, and Speaker PELOSI should be scheduling the vote.

We have only 28 days left in 2019, but that is plenty of time to vote on the USMCA. That is plenty of time to get a win for our farmers and ranchers.

Speaker PELOSI, please schedule the vote.

#### EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PERDUE). The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of John L. Sinatra, Jr., of New York, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of New York.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Sinatra nomination?

Mr. GARDNER. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON), the Senator from Arkansas (Ms. MURKOWSKI), and the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER), the Senator from California (Ms. HARRIS), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), and the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) are necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 75, nays 18, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 378 Ex.]

#### YEAS—75

Alexander	Feinstein	Peters
Baldwin	Fischer	Portman
Barrasso	Gardner	Reed
Bennet	Graham	Risch
Blackburn	Grassley	Roberts
Blunt	Hassan	Romney
Boozman	Hawley	Rosen
Braun	Hoeben	Rubio
Burr	Hyde-Smith	Sasse
Capito	Inhofe	Schumer
Cardin	Johnson	Scott (FL)
Carper	Jones	Scott (SC)
Casey	Kaine	Shaheen
Cassidy	Kennedy	Shelby
Collins	King	Sinema
Coons	Lankford	Stabenow
Cornyn	Leahy	Sullivan
Cortez Masto	Lee	Tester
Cotton	Manchin	Thune
Cramer	McConnell	Tillis
Crapo	McSally	Toomey
Cruz	Moran	Warner
Daines	Murphy	Whitehouse
Enzi	Paul	Wicker
Ernst	Perdue	Young

#### NAYS—18

Blumenthal	Heinrich	Murray
Brown	Hirono	Schatz
Cantwell	Klobuchar	Smith
Duckworth	Markey	Udall
Durbin	Menendez	Van Hollen
Gillibrand	Merkley	Wyden

## NOT VOTING—7

Booker	Murkowski	Warren
Harris	Rounds	
Isakson	Sanders	

The nomination was agreed to.

## EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the next nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Sarah E. Pitlyk, of Missouri, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Missouri.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nebraska.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I oppose the nomination of Sarah Pitlyk to be a Federal district court judge in the Eastern District of Missouri.

I believe that people who are nominated to serve as Federal trial judges ought to know their way around a courtroom. There are basic levels of experience and qualifications that a person needs in order to be an effective trial judge. I have no doubt that there are plenty of experienced, qualified Republican attorneys and State court judges in the Eastern District of Missouri, but Ms. Pitlyk is not one of them.

She has never tried a case. She has never taken a deposition. She has never argued a motion in court. She has never picked a jury. She has never participated at any stage in a criminal matter. The American Bar Association's peer review process rated her "unanimously not qualified." The ABA said that "Ms. Pitlyk's experience to date has a very substantial gap, namely the absence of any trial or even real litigation experience."

The Senate is not doing our justice system any favors by confirming trial judges who lack courtroom experience. My Republican colleagues should stop rubber-stamping judicial nominees who lack basic qualifications and experience.

Ms. Pitlyk also has made many statements in her career that indicate that she has prejudged certain issues. For example, she wrote an article describing the Supreme Court's decision to uphold the Affordable Care Act as "an unprincipled decision." She also gave a speech earlier this year in which she described the Supreme Court's jurisprudence on abortion as "thoroughly activist," and "politically biased," and as containing "gross defects."

She has spent much of her legal career advocating against reproductive rights, including a 2017 article in which she wrote that "surrogacy is harmful to mothers and children, so it's a practice society should not be enforcing." She also said in a 2017 press release that "surrogacy diminishes respect for motherhood and the unique mother-child bond, encourages exploitation of women, and it commodifies pregnancy and children. Surrogacy also weakens society's natural abhorrence of eugenic abortion."

My colleague Senator TAMMY DUCKWORTH wrote a powerful letter in response to Ms. Pitlyk's attacks on surrogacy. Senator DUCKWORTH's letter talked about her two beautiful daughters and her use of assisted reproductive technology to start a family. She wrote: "No American should be denigrated and insulted for starting a family with the help of assisted reproductive technology or opting to use surrogacy, which is often a last resort." She went on to write: "As a mother who struggled with infertility for years and required IVF to start my family, I would be one of the many Americans who could never enter Ms. Pitlyk's courtroom with any reasonable expectation that my case would be adjudicated in a fair and impartial manner. . . . Not after Ms. Pitlyk accused families who opt for surrogacy of contributing to 'grave effects on society' including disrespecting motherhood."

I want to commend Senator DUCKWORTH for this powerful and personal letter. I hope my colleagues pay attention to it.

I appreciate that at least one Republican Senator, Ms. COLLINS of Maine, has said she will vote no on the Pitlyk nomination because of Ms. Pitlyk's lack of qualifications and extreme views. I hope more Republicans will join her.

I will vote no on the Pitlyk nomination, and I urge my colleagues to do the same.

Mrs. FISCHER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the remaining votes in this series be 10 minutes in length.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Pitlyk nomination?

Mr. LEE. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON), the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI), and the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI) would have voted "no."

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER), the Senator from California (Ms. HARRIS), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), and the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) are necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 49, nays 44, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 379 Ex.]

## YEAS—49

Alexander	Fischer	Portman
Barrasso	Gardner	Risch
Blackburn	Graham	Roberts
Blunt	Grassley	Romney
Boozman	Hawley	Rubio
Braun	Hoeben	Sasse
Burr	Hyde-Smith	Scott (FL)
Capito	Inhofe	Scott (SC)
Cassidy	Johnson	Shelby
Cornyn	Kennedy	Sullivan
Cotton	Lankford	Thune
Cramer	Lee	Tillis
Crapo	McConnell	Toomey
Cruz	McSally	Wicker
Daines	Moran	Young
Enzi	Paul	
Ernst	Perdue	

## NAYS—44

Baldwin	Hassan	Reed
Bennet	Heinrich	Rosen
Blumenthal	Hirono	Schatz
Brown	Jones	Schumer
Cantwell	Kaine	Shaheen
Cardin	King	Sinema
Carper	Klobuchar	Smith
Casey	Leahy	Stabenow
Collins	Manchin	Tester
Coons	Markey	Udall
Cortez Masto	Menendez	Van Hollen
Duckworth	Merkley	Warner
Durbin	Murphy	Whitehouse
Feinstein	Murray	Wyden
Gillibrand	Peters	

## NOT VOTING—7

Booker	Murkowski	Warren
Harris	Rounds	
Isakson	Sanders	

The nomination was confirmed.

## EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the next nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Douglas Russell Cole, of Ohio, to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of Ohio.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Cole nomination?

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. JOHNSON), the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI), and the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. JOHNSON) would have voted "yea."

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER), the Senator from California (Ms. HARRIS), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), and the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) are necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COTTON). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 64, nays 29, as follows: