

father-in-law, Bob Brown from Thermopolis, WY, was a member of this group when he served in Korea.

It was such a privilege to introduce the President to some of my home State's Wyoming National Guard members. He actually had two of them up on the stage with him. They are doing a tremendous job on behalf of Wyoming's largest deployment overseas right now in about a decade. We told all of our servicemembers how grateful the Nation is for their service and their sacrifice and their dedication.

Meanwhile, here in Washington, the Democrats continue to block the bills that we need to have passed to keep our Nation secure. Incredibly, they are blocking both the Defense authorization and the Defense funding bills. The whole funding of our national defense expires in 2 weeks, but still the Democrats continue to waste time—precious legislative time—on their partisan, obsessive approach to impeachment.

Their holiday season impeachment is hurting the American people, and especially, it is hurting our military. The defense funding measure includes a well-earned and well-deserved pay raise for the troops. The President told the troops about that on Thanksgiving evening after serving dinner and after eating with them. It makes you wonder why on Earth Democrats would block the pay raise right before Christmas. It is amazing. They seem to be blocking all of the things that need to be done for our country to move ahead. The truth is, they are so focused on giftwrapping an impeachment process for the far left that they have left the rest of us in this country out in the cold.

Besides that, they are slow-walking so many of the pro-worker and pro-farmer USMCA trade deals that are so critical for our Nation. It certainly means a lot for the breadbasket of America. It means so much for us in the Rocky Mountain West. They are preventing us from lowering drug costs.

Above all, people expect us to support our troops. One thing after another after another, the Democrats continue to obstruct. The Republicans are fighting to fully fund the military.

Democrats are in the process of waging war against the Commander in Chief. Remember, both parties came to the table, and they completed a bipartisan budget deal this past summer. The Democrats went back on their word. In doing so, they broke faith with the troops and with all Americans. Democrats—they filibuster, they impeach, and they neglect the troops.

Really, they are hurting the American people, not the President. The President is busy doing his job. This week, he attended NATO's 70th anniversary summit and is also meeting with the U.N. Security Council members. U.S. forces, meanwhile, are facing heightened threats with last year's funding levels.

While necessary, the stopgap spending resolution we have right now is

taking a toll on the military, and here is why. The short-term funding means that a \$22 billion cut has occurred from the summer's bipartisan budget deal. It is harming military readiness. It is harming the training of our troops. It has delayed and suspended weapons systems and programs. Now, that hasn't stopped the House Democrats and the Senate Democrats from blocking the full-year defense measures. They continue to obstruct.

Republicans need Democratic support to pass these bills. These need to be bipartisan bills. The National Defense Authorization Act has a long history of strong bipartisan support. Yet House Democrats continue to delay final passage.

Let's not forget, our troops in harm's way are far away from home this holiday season. They are on the frontlines. They are defending our freedoms. They sacrifice 365 days a year. They do it to protect our Nation. U.S. servicemembers never complain and never quit, and Republicans won't quit supporting them.

Democrats remain too obsessed with impeachment to finish important business. The question is, Why are Democrats fast-tracking impeachment and filibustering defense legislation? Their partisan impeachment production is choreographed down to the final curtain call. It is simply a costly, chaotic waste of time. I believe most Americans know it. That is certainly what I hear in Wyoming.

Democrats turn out to be the party of no—no positive ideas, no positive vision, no positive agenda for America. All they want to do is focus on impeachment. Some ran on it, and others didn't. Whether or not they ran on it, that is what they are doing, and they are neglecting the American people and the wishes and desires of American families for jobs; for a strong and healthy economy, a growing economy; for infrastructure, roads and bridges; for all of the things that are important; for lowering the cost of medical care and lowering the cost of drugs. They are ignoring it all, and certainly they are ignoring national security.

It is time for the Democrats to stop stonewalling. It is time to pass the Defense bills. It is time to give our troops the raise they have earned and deserve. Let's send the right message to our troops as well as to our adversaries. It is time to pass these Defense bills now.

U.N. CLIMATE CONFERENCE

Mr. BARRASSO. Madam President, I also come to the floor today to talk about another issue, and that is that there is a climate conference meeting right now in Europe, the United Nations climate conference. Earlier this week, House Speaker PELOSI and 14 other Democrats traveled to Europe for the conference. To me, they went there to undermine the President and to push their radical Green New Deal.

They told the international group that the United States is committed to

the Paris climate deal. That is just not true. Secretary of State Pompeo said that the Paris climate deal imposed an unfair economic burden on American workers, on American businesses, and on American taxpayers. President Trump began formally withdrawing from the Paris climate deal last month.

It may appeal to Democrats' liberal elite to talk about climate in Europe. Republicans, however, are going to stay focused on the work ahead of us at home. We have a packed year-end agenda here in Congress. Americans expect us to continue the progress we have made on jobs and on the economy—incredible success. This means passing better trade deals, funding the government, improving our roads—the things we were elected to do. The Speaker is nowhere to be found—certainly not on this continent. Rather than pass American priorities, the Speaker is sidelined in Spain.

Republican pro-growth policies have led to a worker boom. Wages are up, and unemployment is down. Wages are up to a 50-year high. Unemployment is down to a 50-year low. I mean, think about that. As a result of Republican tax cuts and regulatory relief and unleashing the American energy, right now, today, we have the lowest African-American unemployment in history. People have more take-home pay, more money in their pockets, and costs are lower because of the regulatory relief. And we have seen this with shopping over the Thanksgiving weekend in terms of people feeling that confidence in the economy and in their futures.

Democrats' message is more regulation and higher costs, which lead to fewer jobs. It is not going to work at home, and it is certainly not going to work in Wyoming. Maybe they think it will work in Europe.

But just to clear up any confusion, President Trump has gotten us out of the Paris Agreement. Republicans' pro-growth agenda has us producing and exporting more energy at home, and we are seeing millions of new jobs.

Republicans are going to stay clear-eyed and focused on the economy. We are going to continue to deliver real results, tangible results, results that people can understand and see and hold on to. We need to do that for the people who elected us, and we will continue to do it.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

CHINA

Mr. KING. Madam President, there is a wonderful guy who lives in Maine named David Mallett. He has a keen ear and an eye for the rural parts of our country, and one of his most famous songs starts out like this: "Inch by inch, row by row, gonna make this garden grow. All it takes is a rake and a hoe and a piece of fertile ground."

The problem is, what we have now is rakes, hoes, a piece of fertile ground,

and we have seeds and crops, but we have an administration that ties the hands of our farmers at every turn, particularly the blueberry farmers in Maine.

Blueberries have been exported from Maine since the 1840s, and the people who are in this farming business are tough and resilient. They don't want bailouts; they want to be able to sell their product on the market.

It is a wonderful product, by the way. If you ever have an opportunity to choose between blueberries and wild blueberries, choose wild blueberries. They are better for you, and they taste better.

In recent years, the market for blueberries has been very difficult because of imports from Canada and additional cultivated blueberries from around the country, so our farmers, being entrepreneurial and doing what we have been telling them to do for years, have gone big time into the export market. Where is a great place to export to? China.

I used to say as Governor that if we could get the Chinese hooked on blueberry muffins—just one a day—all of our problems would be over, and the Maine wild blueberries were getting to that point. Two years ago, \$2.5 million a year of blueberries were going to China and half of the budget of the Wild Blueberry Export Commission was going to develop the Chinese market. Hours and hours, days, dollars—a lot of effort went to develop this Chinese market. Then all of a sudden came the Trump administration tariffs.

Not surprisingly—it seems surprising to the administration—but not surprising to anybody who has paid attention to 500 years of trade, the immediate response to those tariffs was retaliatory tariffs by the Chinese, and one of the first ones was an 80-percent tariff on wild blueberries. We were doing pretty well. From 2014 to 2017, exports to China quadrupled to \$2.5 million. This year they are \$61,000. We have the trade war. It is well known that we have tariffs that are applying to all kinds of agricultural products.

The response from the administration was a massive bailout—a bailout which has now reached something like three times the dollar value of the bailout of the automobile industry back at the beginning of the Obama administration when we almost lost that entire industry. We are now heading toward three times that amount. A lot of the bailout to the automobile industry was paid back. This is not a bailout that is going to be paid back. It has continued to just be paid out to various farmers across the country.

I am sure the farmers in the Midwest, just as the farmers in Maine, don't want bailouts. They want sales. They want to sell their product in the market, which they have been doing, but what has happened is we have this bailout, and I call it the farm bailout lottery. I don't have a spinner on here, but it is a lottery because we don't

know and we don't understand and nobody can tell us why certain crops are in and certain crops are out. Round and round she goes; where she stops, nobody knows—and that is the problem. What is in? Well, let's see. Cranberries are in. Blueberries are out—zip, zero, nothing. Soybeans are in. Wheat is in. Apples are out. Here is what else is in, and tell me if this makes any sense: dairy, hogs, almonds, cranberries, ginseng, grapes, cherries. All these are in. These are getting the bailout money. Some farms are getting over \$500,000: hazelnuts, macadamia nuts, pecans, pistachios, and walnuts but not blueberries and, for some reason, not apples.

We have a double whammy here on this proud industry from Maine. First, there is the Chinese tariff war, of which we are collateral damage. By the way, the same problem is going on with lobsters. They were one of the first products to be retaliated against by the Chinese. We lost that export market, and now the same thing is happening in these agricultural products. It is a double whammy. No. 1, we got hit by the retaliatory tariffs, and No. 2, we are not in on the bailout. We are not in on the funds that are being distributed. Nobody can tell us what the formula is, what the rationale is. Is it who has the biggest, most powerful lobby in Washington? Is it if you are from a State that voted for the President in 2016? What is the rationale? We can't tell what that is.

The President just said yesterday this trade war with China may go on for another year. That means another crop. We have third- and fourth-generation blueberry farmers in Maine leaving the land. It is heartbreaking. These aren't big enterprises. These aren't big operations. These are people with 100-acre farms.

The administration knows about this because I and my colleagues from Maine wrote them in July and asked this question. Wild blueberry should be included in what is called the Market Facilitation Program. It didn't happen. We still don't really know what the criteria is. Just to put a fine point on it, if you are a wild blueberry harvester with a 100-acre farm, you get zip, zero, nada, zilch. If you are a cranberry farmer with a 100-acre bog, you get \$61,000. How is that fair? How is the distinction made? That is the question we are asking.

I have written again today to the Department of Agriculture asking them, A, why we aren't in and, B, how these distinctions are made. I don't think that is an unreasonable question when you are talking about people's livelihoods going back generations. These are tough people. These are resilient people. These are hard-working people. These are people who have given their lives to the land, and they deserve to be supported by their government—not undermined, not challenged, not undercut by their government.

“Inch by inch, row by row, gonna make this garden grow. All it takes is

a rake and a hoe and a piece of fertile ground” and a government that supports your right to make a living at your chosen profession.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, I appreciate the Senator from Maine speaking about the virtues of wild Maine blueberries. They happen to be one of my favorite foods—obviously, the lobsters as well.

I agree with him that there appears to be an arbitrary distinction with these support payments that are supposed to compensate farmers for the trade war with China, which I think, unfortunately, is necessary to get China to conform to a rules-based system when it comes to international trade.

Certainly, in the interest of preserving the wild Maine blueberry, I am happy to offer any services I might be able to provide to support our colleagues from Maine.

UNITED STATES-MEXICO-CANADA TRADE AGREEMENT

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, over the weekend, we marked 1 year since the leaders of the United States, Mexico, and Canada signed the U.S.-Mexico-Canada Trade Agreement. This modern trade agreement will replace the North American Free Trade Agreement, or NAFTA, which has been the guiding force for North American trade for the past quarter of a century.

When NAFTA was created, its goal was to remove barriers that impede free and fair trade and provide economic benefits to all three countries. By any measure, NAFTA has been an overwhelming success, but a lot has changed in 25 years since NAFTA went into effect, and it is time to bring North American trade into the 21st century. That is precisely what the U.S.-Mexico-Canada Trade Agreement, USMCA, will do. It preserves the hallmark provisions of NAFTA, like duty-free access to Mexican and Canadian markets, and adds measures to modernize the agreement. The USMCA provides strong protections for intellectual property, which is critical to protecting the incredible innovation that Americans do right here at home. It also cuts redtape that is preventing countless small businesses from tapping into foreign markets, and it accounts for e-commerce and digital products, something unheard of 25 years ago, at a time when governments around the world are proposing all kinds of new taxes on e-commerce.

It is actually the first free-trade agreement with a digital trade chapter. That is why a lot of folks call this NAFTA 2.0. It is better. It is stronger. It modernizes the original NAFTA.

We have been told by the experts that the USMCA will lead to increased wealth and jobs here in the United States—about 176,000 new jobs. That is