

Withdrawal could not come at a costlier time. In an analysis I requested to review the Federal approach to prioritizing and funding climate resilience projects that address the Nation's most significant climate risks, the Government Accountability Office notes that there were at least 14 disasters whose costs exceeded \$1 billion each in 2018 alone.

GAO, an independent, nonpartisan agency that examines how taxpayer dollars are spent and is known as the congressional watchdog, reported that the total estimated costs reached at least \$91 billion in damage to public and private property.

“The cost of recent weather disasters has illustrated the need to plan for climate change risks and invest in climate resilience,” the report says. “Investing in climate resilience can reduce the need for far more costly steps in the decades to come.”

The Paris Agreement establishes a global goal on adaptation that consists of, one, enhancing adaptation capacity; two, strengthening resilience; and three, reducing vulnerability to climate change in the context of the temperature goal of the agreement. It aims at strengthening the national adaptation efforts, including through support and international cooperation. It recognizes that adaptation is a global challenge faced by all, including the United States.

Because U.S. withdrawal will not formally take effect until November 4, 2020, the U.S. team's posture at COP25 remains largely unchanged. A group of dedicated career civil servants will be on the ground.

Moreover, 2 years ago, numerous U.S. States, cities, Tribal nations, businesses, faith groups, universities, and others enhanced their presence at major international events, including COP meetings, to maintain and encourage American progress toward its national climate goals.

I am proud that nearly 100 Maryland pledgers “Are Still In.” They comprise dozens of businesses—many small. We have over 10 cities, 6 counties, cultural institutions, faith and healthcare organizations, 20 universities, including my alma mater, the University of Maryland School of Law in Baltimore, and investors, such as the State treasurer of Maryland. They are all still in.

Members of the Senate “Are Still In.” I am proud to be leading 38 of my colleagues in S. Res. 404. This bipartisan resolution expresses the sense of the Senate that the United States should be working in cooperation with the international community in continuing to exercise global leadership to address the causes and effects of climate change.

Prior to that, I led a congressional delegation of 10 Senators to COP21 that produced the Paris Agreement in 2015. Then the United States committed to lowering its contribution of greenhouse gas emissions 26 to 28 percent below 2005 levels by 2025.

Business and labor “are still in.” In a recent letter, 75 major CEOs and organized labor that are represented by the AFL-CIO stressed the importance of the Paris Agreement and the need for the United States to remain in it. This represents one of the most powerful recognitions ever from the private sector of the economic risks and opportunities that climate change presents to the United States and the world. The December 2, 2019, Joint Labor Union and CEO Statement on the Paris Agreement comprises a group of CEOs who employ more than 2 million people in the United States and union leaders who represent more than 12.5 million workers.

In 2009, at the Copenhagen COP 15, the U.S. helped to drive the creation of goals for developed nations to mobilize \$100 billion in public and private climate finance in 2020. The result was the Green Climate Fund, which helps to fund climate finance investment in low emissions, climate-resilient development.

The Paris Agreement affirmed and extended that \$100 billion goal. Although President Trump has stymied its funding, the fiscal year 2020 State Department and Foreign Operations bill the Senate Committee on Appropriations reported is the most favorable, forward-leaning on multilateral climate assistance in years, funding renewable energy programs at \$179 million and resiliency programs at \$177 million. In addition, the bill commits \$140 million to the Global Environmental Facility and \$10 million to the U.N. climate convention.

We must not forget the cooperation President Trump would have us forget. On a bipartisan basis, the U.S. Congress has uniformly rejected the President's repeated calls to zero out climate assistance funding. This rebuke represents the true, cooperative spirit of our country, once a global leader on climate issues.

I urge President Trump to reassert our Nation's strong leadership in implementing the Paris Agreement before the next Conference of the Parties. In the meantime, I applaud the courage of the general public, universities, faith-based groups, nonprofits, labor organizations, private sector companies, and State and local governments that have helped to step into the void President Trump created by his withdrawal from this agreement.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arkansas.

UNITED STATES-MEXICO-CANADA AGREEMENT

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, I rise to discuss the need to pass the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement.

It is frustrating that we have to continue to speak about this issue. We have been so close for a long time now, but the lack of action on the part of the House leadership continues to unnecessarily delay its ratification.

Our neighbors to the north and south are our natural allies and trading part-

ners; yet our trade policy with them has not been updated in 25 years. The President and his team have worked very hard to get Canada and Mexico to the negotiating table to modernize our trade agreement in a mutually beneficial manner. That hard work has paid off in the form of the USMCA. It is ready for ratification, and the Senate is eager to get that done.

Unfortunately, we are at the mercy of the House, which must act first. The House leadership's refusal to move this trade deal is preventing additional job creation in our country, and it is sending the wrong signal to our trading partners across the globe. We ought to be spurring economic activity by striking fair trade agreements globally, not sitting on our hands and refusing to approve an agreement between two of our top trading partners.

A fair and mutually beneficial trade agreement with our neighbors to the north and south is very important to my home State of Arkansas. Canada and Mexico are No. 1 and No. 2 on the list of the top 10 destinations for Arkansas' exports. Arkansas is one of a handful of States that in recent years has consistently exported more than what it has imported from Canada and Mexico.

The World Trade Center Arkansas, which has played a valuable role in connecting businesses in my State with international partners for over a decade, recently released a report that summarizes trade and jobs data for the Natural State.

The center's report underscores the value trade brings to my State's economy and reinforces the fact that the path to a more prosperous, long-term outlook for Arkansas is through opening additional markets for our farmers, manufacturers, and small businesses. The report notes that, as of September 2019, trade in Arkansas supported nearly 350,000 jobs. This represents approximately 26 percent of the State's total employed labor force. It points to a direct correlation between job numbers and trade, documenting that trade-related jobs in the State have grown six times faster than total employment over the past few years.

More importantly, for our purposes here today, the report underscores just how crucial Canada and Mexico are for Arkansas' economy. The Natural State's exports to Canada amounted to \$1.2 billion last year. Our exports to Mexico totaled \$870 million in that same time span. Combined, these two countries account for a third of Arkansas' total exports. Nearly 69,000 jobs in my State are dependent on trade with Canada, and another 41,000 are tied to trade with Mexico.

Melvin Torres, the center's director of Western Hemisphere and European Trade, praised Arkansas' effective partnership with both countries for creating this “symbiotic and successful relationship.” That relationship will only grow with the ratification of the USMCA.

Canada and Mexico aren't just important markets for my State. Each of our States stands to gain with the ratification of the USMCA. This landmark trade deal will create over 175,000 jobs, which will help to strengthen our economy and America's middle class. This overdue modernization of NAFTA will benefit workers in a wide array of industries. Manufacturing, tech, and more stand to gain from the USMCA. It will add much needed certainty for farmers and ranchers, who currently need every market they can get. Rural America is struggling right now, and approving this agreement will provide a shot in the arm for the rural economy.

The ratification of the USMCA, along with the recent deals that have been struck with South Korea and Japan, will show the rest of the world that the U.S. is open for business. Proving that the U.S. is negotiating in good faith to reach mutually beneficial outcomes for all parties that are involved could really move the needle in other ongoing trade standoffs.

The House leadership needs to get on the stick. The USMCA is too important for our Nation's economic future for it to be sitting in limbo while House Democrats focus on partisan goals.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BOOZMAN). The majority leader.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to legislative session for a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

EQUAL PAY

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, this past October, the young women who make up the Burlington High School girls soccer team in Burlington, VT, made a statement: The time for equal pay is now. All they are looking for is for their leaders—leaders like us in Congress—to show the courage to make it happen.

It all began one Friday night in October, when, after scoring a goal to put them ahead in the closing minutes of a game against neighboring rivals South Burlington, four exuberant members of the soccer team removed their jerseys to reveal T-shirts emblazoned with this simple phrase: "#EqualPay."

The reception to their silent statement was reminiscent of that moment when the U.S. Women's National Team made history in July, winning its second consecutive World Cup title. After a thrilling win over the Netherlands, the stadium in France was filled with chants of "Equal Pay! Equal Pay!"

One Friday in October, the stands—though smaller—in Burlington, VT, erupted in the same way. The result? Yellow cards for the offending players, issued by a referee bound by the rules of the league.

The young women of the Burlington High School soccer team became overnight sensations. Within a matter of days, they had sold more than 2,000 of their now iconic simple white T-shirts, raising more than \$30,000 to support the Greater Burlington Girls Soccer League. Men were invited to pay an extra \$4 for the \$25 T-shirt: 16 percent of the cost, to represent the pay gender pay gap in Vermont. Their story was reported by local outlets like VTdigger and the Burlington Free Press, and it was featured on "Good Morning America" and on CNN. It even reached across the pond, where the UK's Daily Mail featured the team's advocacy. I ask unanimous consent that the report from VTdigger be printed in the RECORD following these remarks.

The lesson here is simple, and the voices could not be clearer: Equal pay for equal work should not be controversial, nor should it be challenged. Yet today in Vermont, a woman makes \$0.84 for every \$1 earned by a man. In some States, the gap is as wide as 70 percent. It is inexplicable. It is inexcusable. And it needs to stop.

Marcelle and I are proud to support the young women of the Burlington High School soccer team. We proudly wore our #EqualPay shirts outside the U.S. Capitol, standing in solidarity with these young Vermonters and with women everywhere who are simply demanding what should be theirs: equal pay for equal work.

Earlier this year, after the U.S. Women's National Team's inspiring victory at the World Cup, I reintroduced a simple resolution calling for the Federation Internationale de Football Association, FIFA, to immediately eliminate gender pay inequity and treat all athletes with the same respect and dignity, regardless of gender. It is straightforward. It is common sense. And it is past due.

Following the October game, the referee who issued the yellow card bought one of the team's #EqualPay shirts for himself. I find in that action a simple metaphor: There is simply no longer support for arcane practices that never should have existed. We should heed the call of the next generation and end these discriminatory practices, not just in sports but across the workforce. Equal pay for equal work should be the right of every person. It is as simple as that.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the VTdigger, Oct. 22, 2019]

BURLINGTON GIRLS SOCCER TEAM MAKES WAVES WITH EQUAL PAY ACTIVISM

(By Aidan Quigley)

BURLINGTON.—When Burlington girls soccer midfielder Helen Worden knocked in the take-the-lead goal during the team's Friday

night game against South Burlington with under five minutes to play, her team burst into a celebration.

Team members took the opportunity to lift their jerseys up to reveal #equalpay T-shirts underneath, with a few removing their jerseys to show the full #equalpay shirts.

While four members of the teams received yellow cards for removing their jerseys, the celebration—and team's efforts for gender pay equality—went viral over the weekend, with an appearance on "Good Morning America," coverage on CNN and a slew of supportive messages.

The team was inspired by the U.S. women's national soccer team's campaign this summer during the World Cup. Members of the national team filed a federal lawsuit alleging gender discrimination against U.S. Soccer which stated the women's team generated \$20 million more in revenue than the men's team while earning a quarter of what the men were paid.

Klara Martone, Burlington's senior goalie, said that the players were working hard in school and wanted to bring attention to the pay gap in society.

"The idea that we could work this hard and still make less money just based on our gender is incredible to me," Martone said. "We want to live in our adult lives in a world where we don't have to worry about making less money."

The girls have sold 2,000 T-shirts and raised a total of \$30,000 as of Monday afternoon.

Worden went to France this summer and witnessed the United States win the World Cup. A chant after the win stuck with her.

"People were cheering 'equal pay,' and it was super inspiring," Worden said. "So I came back and talked to (my teammates) about it, and said we should contribute in some way."

Martone said that the team originally planned on wearing "equal pay" T-shirts for a dress-up day near the start of the season. But the idea gained steam, and the team decided to open up T-shirt orders to the community.

Junior right back Ruby Wool said at the start, having the boys soccer team wear the T-shirts was a "big victory" for the team.

"Those small little steps we were taking were so big to us, and with each thing everything is getting bigger," Wool said. "As of right now, I don't think it's going to get smaller for a while."

The team was "fuming" when they received yellow cards at Friday's game, Worden said.

As four of the girls received yellow cards, the crowd chanted "equal pay."

"The good thing about the card was hearing everybody had our back," senior center back/mid Maggie Barlow said. "That was one of the moments we were like, 'wow, we have such a big support system.' It was worth it because that was amazing to hear."

Coach Jeff Hayes said some members of the South Burlington team came over the referees and requested that they not card their opponents. The cards were an exciting moment for the team, he said.

The four players who received yellow cards had to be temporarily taken out of the game and were not able to check back in before South Burlington equalized minutes later. The game ended in a 1-1 tie.

The effort was applauded by Brandi Chastain, a longtime member of the U.S. national team who famously removed her jersey in celebration of her penalty kick goal which won the 1999 World Cup.

"Thank you @bhsgirlssoccer for standing up, celebrating and taking your jerseys off for #equalpay! Proud of you! #rolemodels," Chastain tweeted Saturday.

Removing a jersey as part of a goal celebration—a popular goal celebration—is an