

Missouri would lose \$350 million in Federal highway funds if we hadn't figured out how to fund that fifth year, which we did figure out just a few days ago. Knowing that is going to happen allows people to begin to look forward to other things.

UNITED STATES-MEXICO-CANADA TRADE  
AGREEMENT

Mr. President, on trade, I was predicting on Monday that we would get to the USMCA before the end of the year. I was pleased on Tuesday when it was announced that we had an agreement between the House and the administration.

The votes had been there for a long time to pass this, but the House had to pass it first. So it is important to understand that the election has consequences. Speaker PELOSI got to decide and got to do some final negotiation, but trade is important.

Trade policy, tax policy, and regulatory policy are the three Federal policies that make a difference in how competitive we are and how strong our economy is. Certainly, when you have our No. 1 and 2 trading partners—Mexico, our No. 1 trading partner, and Canada, our No. 2 trading partner—involved, clearly, when they are the only two countries that we share a border with in the continental United States, for the neighborhood to do well, it is important.

What has happened in Mexico since NAFTA is incredible. What has happened in the United States in a positive way is also incredible. So, hopefully, we will see the continuation of the commitment to have a vote in the House this year and a vote in the Senate as soon as we meet the deadlines the law requires—the waiting periods—once we get a bill in the Senate. A lot of people are going to be relieved to know that there is more certainty about that.

TRIBUTE TO LEIGHTON GRANT

Mr. President, I also want to take a moment today to recognize Leighton Grant, for whom I asked earlier to have floor privileges for the rest of this Congress.

Leighton Grant has really been critical both to my work in appropriations and in our work on foreign policy in our office. He has handled many of our national defense matters in the 116th Congress.

Leighton's 15 years of service to our country, both in Active Duty and as a civilian in the U.S. Air Force, have allowed him to cultivate a deep understanding of national security issues that affect the State of Missouri and affect our country. His prior experience at the Pentagon, where he worked extensively on generating the Air Force's budget and strategy documents, has been particularly valuable in my work as a defense appropriator.

The air defense of the country is critical. The appropriations decisions we make are critical. The order we keep them in is critical—keeping defense lines active so that we are not stopping

and starting to meet our future needs—so doing that in a reasonable way matters.

Leighton certainly understands that, and he should. He joined the Air Force in 2004 as a command and control battle management operator. He served four deployments in Iraq and Afghanistan as part of the global War on Terror. He also deployed to Qatar and Jordan, as well as to Latin America.

He holds a bachelor's degree in aeronautics, as well as a master's degree in project management. While working as our military fellow, he completed work at the Air War College and obtained a certificate of legislative studies at Georgetown University.

He has contributed greatly. He has helped support us in veteran casework, Defense appropriations, and military construction projects that will impact our State.

On Sunday night, I ran into a mom who said: I just want to thank you for all you did to get my son out of Syria. This was a young man who got caught up while hiking in Syria. She knew Leighton Grant's name because Leighton Grant took that seriously and, after several weeks of working, helped to get him out of Syria. That is the kind of thing he has helped us do. He has worked on matters that relate to Iran, Colombia, Australia, China, and other areas. I am glad to have him.

I want to thank his wife Jennifer, his daughter Marleigh, and his son Cyrus for supporting his career as he serves the Nation. I wish him and his family well as they embark on a new chapter. I hope this year of working with the Senate and Congress, with the vast breadth of issues he has helped us with, turns out to be as valuable to him as his help has been to us.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. DAINES). The clerk will call the roll. The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

TAX CUT AND JOBS ACT

Mr. BRAUN. Mr. President, it has been almost a year since I was sworn in. I thought it was a good time to kind of reminisce a little bit about the first year of being a U.S. Senator from Indiana. I want to cite that, when you come from a place like Indiana, it is where America really works. Think about it. We still believe in balanced budgets. We have rainy day funds. We take on big issues and talk about how we are going to pay for it, not borrow the money, throw it on the backs of our kids and grandkids.

So, in being here now nearly a year, I want to reminisce back to what motivated me to stick my neck out and do it in the first place. I saw in November of 2016 that it looked like we might have a different dynamic here in our U.S. Government. I look back and see,

in December of 2017, a Main Street entrepreneur, someone who has always lived by those rules of stick your neck out, take a risk. You don't really exceed mediocrity unless you do things that push the envelope a little bit now and then, but do it in the context of where it is sustainable.

I noticed, in December of 2017, we finally got some legislation across the finish line that rewards enterprisers, rewards Main Street USA. That was in the Tax Cut and Jobs Act passed then. I did not know how it was going to unfold. Of course, even our CBO said it was going to end up costing the government, not rewarding it through more enterprise, greater revenues. Well, we have now got some evidence from it. We have got the hottest economy that we have had in modern history, and, yes, we are raising record revenues, despite having lower tax rates.

Well, that sounds like the math wouldn't work out. Well, there is a point, especially in small business on Main Street, that you will not keep enterprising, you will not work hard if you end up having to send too much to a place like this that over the years did not, to me, look like it was delivering good value. So we have been vindicated; it is working.

HEALTHCARE

Mr. President, so what else has happened in this first year? That happened before I got here. I ran because I wanted to weigh in on things like the cost of healthcare. I tackled that in my own business back in 2008. I found a way to make it consumer driven to where the people that use healthcare actually have some skin in the game.

I did it in a way I wanted to emphasize wellness, not remediation. I tried as a State legislator back in 2015—served 3 years in the Indiana State House—and realized how hard that was going to be. I had three really good bills that now, ironically, are pertinent here on the main stage. I could not even get a committee hearing. The healthcare industry has dug in to the point where I think, if they don't start embracing the fact that they need to reform themselves, they could be under a drastically new system.

So we had a President that was elected that wasn't going to be happy with business as usual. I was hoping that we might parlay some of that into real results here. Well, we have worked a year on trying to reform the healthcare system, and we are really not any further ahead than what we were a year ago. That is because the system is digging in and fighting it. That doesn't mean I am going to give up. That is kind of bad news, other than the fact that 80 Senators have come forward to say, Hey, you are not doing a good job. We have got suggestions. That ought to be a real wake-up signal that you get with it.

JUDICIAL NOMINATIONS

Mr. President, one thing we have done here that has been immensely valuable is that we, as conservatives, have

been able to impact our court system, which got lopsided over the years, to where many laws that were passed here get into the court system and then either get overturned or get impacted in ways that did not have the original intent. We here in our own conference, I think, have addressed that imbalance, and I think here soon we will have appointed, in the 3 years that President Trump has been at the helm, the 50th circuit judge. That is impressive. We are also filling slots now that we made a change in the rules here to not only get judges appointed but also to fill a lot of the slots in our government that are vacant. So that is good news.

#### ECONOMIC GROWTH

Mr. President, you don't hear much about the fact that household incomes have increased more than \$5,000 a family in the 3 years since President Trump was elected. It went up a total of \$1,000 in the 16 years through the Bush and Obama administrations. That should be the banner, the headline, and sadly, we are mired in other discussions that I will address here in a moment.

I believe in the long run that, if we are going to change the dynamic, we will need more disruption in an institution that, in the year I have been here, I have been surprised how many people come here actually wanting more, not realizing that when you are running trillion-dollar deficits, that is a bad business partner. That is a business partner that I would hedge my bets and maybe find other ways to pay the way in the long run. Sadly, I don't think we are going to fix that component until we probably have a crisis or two, and then we solve it in that fashion.

So the budget which is, in my opinion, in the long run what we need to do here, if we want to be helpful to the American public, it has got to straighten itself out. Whether that will happen, I do not know.

#### UNITED STATES-MEXICO-CANADA TRADE AGREEMENT

Mr. President, let's talk about some of the things that have been occupying time here, and let's talk about something that looks like, finally, it is going to get across the finish line: USMCA. We hear about trade issues. It is correct to be concerned about trade. Our focus is normally on the Chinese. I do believe this has been the time to take them on, call them out for their bad behavior when it comes to stealing intellectual property, forced technology transfers, manipulating currencies, creating gluts, dumping it on the market; no one else is doing that. Until President Trump came along, nobody else was talking about it. He was over in Europe recently, reminding our allies that, when you are running trillion-dollar deficits, you can no longer afford to be paying the bills for the rest of the world. That is business as usual, thank goodness, because we simply can't afford it anymore.

USMCA reflects arrangements between our two largest trading partners,

Canada and Mexico—many inequities there, mostly because we were kind in those original agreements, but it needed to be changed because we cannot sustain that in the long run. This is going to help manufacturing. It is going to help farmers. The number of jobs it will create, even in this low unemployment context, are amazing.

When you look at that, it finally gets across the finish line, and we now, over the next couple weeks, couple months—who knows—we are dealing with what is going to happen in one of the biggest political events that has occurred in the history of this country. All I can tell you is we will get through it.

I don't think we are going to find out any more than what we know currently, but hopefully, when we do get it resolved, we are going to give full credit due to getting tasks done like the USMCA, lowering taxes, creating more enterprise across this country, and hopefully relying less on this institution in all parts of our daily lives until it sets the example that it starts to live within its means, live sustainably. And then we start tackling issues like the cost of healthcare, where we start talking about climate, when we start talking about the issues that future generations will have to deal with and that are currently paying all the bills through the money that we are borrowing, hopefully that dynamic will change, and hopefully, we will be back on track in November 2020 with the leadership that has put us in a position to actually change things here to where we do live in a way in the future that is sustainable, setting the example starting right here.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SASSE). The Senator from Georgia.

#### FAREWELL TO THE SENATE

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, I always come to the well of the Senate with a purpose. I try not to talk too long, and I try to make my point and get out before I make a big mistake. When you are saying thank you to people who have done so much for you, it is almost always the time where you do make a mistake and you leave somebody out here and somebody out there and somebody out here. I am going to do a little something I have never done before. I know one thing, I will leave nobody out.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD a list of names of my staff.

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

#### PERSONAL OFFICE STAFF AND INTERNS

Monica Heil, Jeremy Johnson, Jay Sulzmann, Amanda Maddox, Marie Gordon, Charles Spry, Michael Gay, Toni Brown, Jody Redding, Kathie Miller, Nancy Bobbitt, Nancy Brooks, Tommy Nguyen, Maureen Rhodes, Sheila Robinson, Andrew Blascovich, Michael Black.

Laura Gower, Will Dent, Jack Overstreet, Gus Youmans, Elizabeth McKay, Tripp

Adams, Hanna Yu, Preston Miller, Kristine Nichols, Brad Williamson, Ryan Williams, Brooke Doss, Drew Ferguson, Connor Rabb, Taylor McDowell, Logan Purvis.

Caroline Maughon, Kate Hunter, Nyjel Jackson, Jason Maynard, Max Turner, Hannah Kitzmiller, Colleen O'Connell, Ken Ciarlatta, Seth MacKenney, Riya Vashi, Matt Sartor, Sahiti Namburur, Olivia Kelly, Frederick Severtson, Floyd Buford.

#### VA COMMITTEE STAFF

Adam Reece, Thomas Coleman, Reider Grunseith, Asher Allman, DeKisha Williams, Barry Walker, Leslie Campbell, Annabell McWherter, John Ashley, Brian Newbold, Lindsay Dearing, David Shearman, Patrick McGuigan, Jillian Workman, Emily Blair, Pauline Schmitt.

#### ETHICS COMMITTEE STAFF

Deborah Sue Mayer, Karen Gorman, Cami Morrison, Geoff Turley, Madeline Dang, Shane Kelly, Katharine Quaglieri, Kelly Selesnick, Charlotte Underwood, Danny Remington, Katie Jordan, Gabrielle Quintana, Taylore Presta, Taisha Saintil, Mary Yuengert.

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, it contains a list of literally hundreds of people who have helped me get to where I am today in this Chamber. A few of them are in this Chamber with me right now and a lot of them were here Tuesday of last week when the Senate was very kind to give me a sendoff. In fact, I thought they were so happy I was leaving, I had done something really wrong, and I was saving them some trouble, but they were really happy because we were being happy together about the years we have had together.

I have had 15 years together with Members of the U.S. Senate, and it has been the greatest 15 years of my life. I learned as much about myself as I learned about anybody else, but I learned even more about my country, which I love so passionately.

I want to take a few minutes today to talk about a few people I want to thank for what they said about me, what they have done for me, and how they have helped me. I wish to also tell the people who may be listening to this show or watching C-SPAN today to understand there are a lot of people who make us work. We do all the mistakes by ourselves without any help, but the good things we do take a lot of help. They take a lot of strength and a lot of time and a lot of commitment.

The 100 Members of this Senate sitting here have literally hundreds of people behind them who help them do their job they otherwise couldn't do. I represent 10 million people; Senators from California, almost 30 million people; from New York, almost 15 million people. All of the States have different populations, but all of them have a lot of people who need help.

That is what Members of the Senate are there to do, along with the Members of the House, and that is to give them the help they need from the country they love and the country they were born in or became a naturalized citizen in.

I want to talk today more about the hard work—the hard work of licking stamps and envelopes when I first got