

that Hezbollah can control that country. They want to destroy our presence in Bahrain, where the Fifth Fleet is located. You can go on and on.

In the end, I think the question becomes, Are we prepared to retreat from that region entirely? You cannot come here and criticize the President for removing troops from the Syrian-Turkish border and abandoning the Kurds and at the same time argue: But you don't have the power unless we authorize you to defend those very troops if they come under attack by some Iranian proxy group. Yet that seems to be the argument.

You cannot argue: We cannot just pick up and leave the Iraqis at the mercy of the Iranian regime. I assure you that if the President announced tomorrow "I am pulling out of Iraq" or if he said before the Soleimani strike "I am pulling out of Iraq," the floor would be filled with people saying that we have abandoned our allies; we have abandoned the Kurds in Northern Iraq; we have abandoned the Sunnis, who are scared of the Iranians.

You cannot argue that and argue at the same time that you think we need to be present and continue to work toward the functionality of that State and at the same time say: But you need congressional approval to act in defense of the people we send there who wear the uniform—or our diplomats, for that matter. Yet that seems to be the argument behind this AUMF.

The vote is going to be what it is. We are going to have this debate. I remember about a year and a half ago, when tensions were high with North Korea, they wanted an AUMF for that.

You can disagree with this White House all you want. I don't think we have had a more anti-war President in my lifetime than the one we have right now. If you think about it for a moment, almost any other predecessor may have responded with a lot less restraint to some of the provocations and attacks we have seen from Iran and its proxies. He acted in a way that I think history will fully justify and in defense of American lives in taking out Soleimani and disrupting a near-term plot that could have very easily have killed dozens, if not hundreds, of Americans in the near term.

I chuckle when I hear people saying: Well, how do we know what Soleimani was doing? Well, that was his full-time job. He wasn't a stockbroker or realtor or diplomat. His full-time job was to travel the world to set up groups and equip groups so that when he told them to go, they could go kill Americans. That was his full-time job. That is what he was doing there.

I believe when all is said and done, history will fully vindicate the decision that was made.

We will have this debate at some point. I imagine that at some point it will move to the floor. It is a privileged resolution. I just think it is short-sighted, and I hope that some of my colleagues who have signed on to it

thinking that somehow we were exerting Congress's constitutional authority—I have no problem with asserting Congress's constitutional authority when it is actually being challenged, but there is no congressional constitutional authority that can prevent a President or should prevent a President from acting in defense of our men and women in uniform when we deploy them abroad. In my view, that is what this bill, which will shortly be before us, does. That is the practical implication of it, so I hope those who chose to be for it will reconsider.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. CRAMER. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to express my opposition to the War Powers Act resolution that is making its way through Congress. I believe it is designed to hurt our President politically, while inflicting long-term damage to our national security and military readiness.

Iranian provocation is nothing new. In the last several months, they have drastically and intentionally escalated tensions in the region. After several measured responses, President Trump made the appropriate decision to eliminate General Soleimani, a terrorist mastermind who ordered and helped carry out many attacks on American personnel and our allies.

I want to emphasize an overlooked point here. General Soleimani was killed in Iraq, not Iran. He was in Iraq, in a car with another known terrorist, driving to meet militia members who recently fired rockets at Americans, killing an American contractor with rocket fire, and tried to storm our Embassy. I am going to remind everybody that our Embassy in Baghdad is sovereign U.S. territory.

Whether through an existing authorization to use military force or the War Powers Act, President Trump was well within his legal bounds to take action against a known terrorist sitting in Iraq plotting attacks against U.S. citizens. It would have been culpable negligence to not act on the intelligence informing us of General Soleimani's position, location, and his imminent plans to attack again soon. I thank God the days of appeasement are behind us and we learned from history. President Trump averted another Benghazi-like tragedy.

The President made Iranian leadership pay a price for its aggression. His decisive action made Iran realize that the cost of escalation was more than they can afford, and it worked. Without the loss of American life, while following our Constitution and laws, President Trump deescalated tensions with Iran and, through a clear message of strength, made war less likely.

My colleagues on the other side of this issue know all of this well. They watched it play out in real time, just like the rest of us. Yet, whether it is their deeply rooted disdain for this President or a misunderstanding of the threats that the United States faces every day, they want to limit the President's ability to protect Americans abroad.

The legislation they are promoting requires termination or in some cases complete withdrawal of our forces without any strategic or tactical considerations. Such actions are not based on military doctrine, the recommendations of senior military leaders, or even foreign policy experts; they would be based solely on politics and would constitute a strategic long-term loss in exchange for what they think would be a short-term political win.

Ultimately, my colleagues who support this resolution refuse to accept the undeniable reality that the concept of peace through strength works. Removing the powers and capabilities of our military leaders that keep our country safe will not make us safer.

Whether through personal animosity toward our President or a misunderstanding of the importance of deterring our enemies, some in this Chamber are advocating for changes that would make our country less safe. I will not support their efforts, and I urge the rest of my colleagues to do the same.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

UNITED STATES-MEXICO-CANADA TRADE AGREEMENT

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, last week, the Senate Finance Committee voted on the U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement. It is called USMCA. I did something I have never done. I voted for it. I have never voted for a trade agreement in my time in the House of Representatives and my time in the Senate. In fact, I helped to lead the opposition to the original NAFTA among freshmen Members of Congress because I recognized that every single one of these trade agreements basically had the template of corporate interests at the center of them. In other words, these trade agreements—whether it was NAFTA, or the North American Free Trade Agreement, whether a half generation later it was the Central America Free Trade Agreement, whether it was the free trade agreement with South Korea, or whether it was the Permanent Normal Trade Relations with China—all of them were written by corporate interests serving the profitability of the executives and

the major stockholders of these companies.

They all tended to precipitate this under these trade agreements in this Congress, under Presidents of both parties, I might add. I disagreed with the first President Bush, then President Clinton, then the second President Bush, and then President Obama. All of them would submit trade agreements that were written for corporate interests, I believe, at the expense of workers.

What happened, typically, was that companies that lobbied Congress to pass these trade agreements would shut down production in Provo, UT, in the Presiding Officer's State, or Cleveland or Dayton, in my State. They would shut down production there, move their production overseas, get their tax breaks, and get their low-wage labor, often worked on by—almost always—nonunion workers, sometimes underage workers who were very inexpensive. The products would be manufactured and then sold back into the United States. That became the business model for company after company after company since the North American Free Trade Agreement, where corporations outsourced jobs in order to save money, always at the expense of communities, particularly in the industrial Midwest, always at the expense of workers, and always at the expense of the middle class.

It was welcome news to me when Candidate Trump, with whom I agree with on almost nothing, said he would renegotiate the North American Free Trade Agreement. So I tried to work with him. I told him that I supported his renegotiation.

I worked with Ambassador Lighthizer, the Trade Representative, the Ambassador for President Trump—the so-called U.S. Trade Representative. I said to them that we want workers to be the centerpiece of this trade agreement.

Well, what happened? A year into his Presidency, President Trump proposed the same kind of trade agreement that we had seen all along—a trade agreement where corporations were at the center of the agreement and workers were betrayed.

This is a President who has betrayed workers day after day after day. He refused to raise the minimum wage. He cut overtime pay for 50,000 Ohio workers. He put people in the courts who put a thumb on the scales of justice, choosing corporations over workers and choosing Wall Street over consumers. It is a White House that looks like a retreat for Wall Street executives except on Tuesdays and Fridays, when it looks like a retreat for a drug company executive. That is what the President proposed.

Speaker PELOSI, Senator WYDEN and I, and worker representatives—the AFL-CIO, the UAW, the CWA, the machinists, and the steelworkers—all said: No, we are not going to support another trade agreement that sends

jobs overseas. We want a trade agreement written for workers.

We said to the President and the President's Trade Representative: We are not going to support this unless you include strong labor enforcement standards for workers.

They basically ignored us. We had tried to work with them. They basically ignored us. They insisted we pass their bill.

Finally, after a year—more than a year—the administration came along kicking and screaming and agreed with us only because they knew they couldn't pass a trade agreement without it.

It took the language that Senator WYDEN and I submitted for workers. It works in this way: For the first time, a worker is empowered to challenge the violation of labor law. So a Mexican worker, where the company has broken the law by paying them a sub-minimum wage, where the company has broken the law by refusing them to organize or to allow unions to attempt to organize, where a company breaks the law on worker safety—a worker at that company, anonymously, at that worksite, can file a complaint and set off the clock of the process so we can actually challenge when they break the law.

We know why companies close factories in Ohio and in the State of my friend from Rhode Island, in Cranston, RI. They close factories and open them in Mexico because they can pay lower wages, and they can take advantage of workers who don't have rights. American workers can't compete with that. We know that, and we get a race to the bottom on wages.

What this agreement does is that it puts workers at the center. It allows for real labor enforcement, real enforcement of labor standards. So I voted for this agreement. It passed with only three “no” votes in the Senate committee. It will likely pass on the floor either this week or next week.

But I want to be straight with American workers. This isn't a perfect agreement. It is one trade deal that Democrats fixed. Democrats and labor fixed it. Republicans opposed the fix but are now voting for it because they still want USMCA, but it will not fix the rest of President Trump's economic policies that put corporations over workers.

Let me give you an example. If you are a company in Dayton, OH, you pay a 21-percent corporate tax rate. If you move to Mexico or you move to France or you move to China, you pay only a 10.5-percent corporate tax rate. So our government continues this because of President Trump's tax bill, the tax bill that caused us now to have a trillion-dollar-a-year deficit—the largest deficit we have had, except in times of recession. That tax bill still will make it attractive for companies to shut down and move overseas. This helps with that.

As I said, I voted yes for the first time on a trade agreement because by

including Brown-Wyden, Democrats have made this agreement, for the first time, pro-worker. We set an important precedent that, from now on, every trade agreement we negotiate—and, I believe, negotiated by Presidents in either party—will include language like Brown-Wyden, making sure that workers are at the table and that trade agreements look out for workers, unlike trade agreements in the past.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 20 minutes in morning business.

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

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, the publication *Grist* did an article recently about climate change with a bunch of images. I grabbed a few of those images, and I have added a few in this speech because they give a pretty good overview of the mess that we are in on climate change.

Right now, the most devastating wildfires anyone can remember are ripping across Australia. Here, you see an iconic kangaroo going by a building up in flames. Those Australian fires have destroyed thousands of homes. They have killed an estimated 1 billion animals—get your head around 1 billion animals killed—and they have made a day of breathing the air in Sidney, Australia, the equivalent of smoking 37 cigarettes. In fact, I read in the news that in a tennis championship in Australia today, one of the competitors withdrew because the air was so bad that she couldn't finish her match.

Why is this going on? According to the Australia Bureau of Meteorology, Australia has warmed by about a full degree Celsius over the last century. That means a longer, hotter fire season, which loads the dice in favor of extreme winds and heat and bushfire, as they call it in Australia.

Why did it warm in Australia? The cause could not be more clear. This is the measurement of carbon dioxide levels in the Earth's atmosphere, going back hundreds of thousands of years—100, 200, 300, 400, 500, 600, 700, and 800,000 years. That is way back. There was no agriculture then, no wheel then, and, for sure, no Twitter—nothing.

Over time, we have seen this steady range of atmospheric CO₂ levels, running between about 180 and—here is the cresting out—just under 300 parts per million. So it is 800,000 years, all between 180 and 300 degrees. That is a 120-degree range.

We are now out of that range by more than the entire range itself. We are out by more than 120. This chart goes up to 400 parts per million. We are literally off the chart right now at 410 parts per million. Of course, this is connected to heat. That is not news.

The graphics here were compiled by Clayton Aldern and Emily Pontecorvo