

ADMINISTRATION OF OATH OF OFFICE

The VICE PRESIDENT. If the Senator-designate will now present herself at the desk, the Chair will administer the oath of office.

The Senator-elect, KELLY LOEFFLER, escorted by Ms. ERNST, advanced to the desk of the Vice President; the oath prescribed by law was administered to her by the Vice President; and she severally subscribed to the oath in the Official Oath Book.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Congratulations.

(Applause, Senators rising.)

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BOOZMAN). The Senator from Maryland is recognized.

NOMINATION OF JOVITA CARRANZA

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I rise today to discuss the nomination of U.S. Treasurer Jovita Carranza to lead the Small Business Administration. Treasurer Carranza's nomination comes at a time of great change for American small businesses. With the growing diversity in America, the face of business ownership in America is naturally also becoming more diverse.

I have witnessed these changes firsthand in my home State of Maryland, which currently boasts the highest concentration of women-owned businesses in the country, as well as the highest concentration of minority-owned businesses. Maryland's success has been no accident; it is as a result of our leaders' decades-long commitment to creating opportunities for underserved entrepreneurs, which began when the late Baltimore Congressman Parren J. Mitchell created the first Federal set-aside for minority contractors in 1977.

It was with this understanding that I requested a seat on the Small Business Committee when I joined this body in 2006, and it is with this understanding that I am hopeful that Treasurer Carranza will provide much needed leadership at the SBA and serve as an advocate for entrepreneurs—especially those from underserved communities—within the administration.

If confirmed to lead the SBA, Treasurer Carranza will enter an agency that has not had a Deputy Administrator since April 2018 and that has been led by its General Counsel since former Administrator Linda McMahon resigned in April 2019. She will join an administration that has pushed for drastic cuts at the SBA in every budget it has sent to Congress. I am grateful that our Appropriations Committee has consistently rejected the administration's devastating budget proposals, and I hope that Treasurer Carranza will work to ensure that the administration's fiscal year 2021 budget is not more of the same.

Minorities, women, veterans, and entrepreneurs from other underserved communities face specific, historical barriers to business ownership, and they need an SBA that has the leader-

ship, vision, and tools required to meet their needs. I would like to use this opportunity to highlight what I believe are the two most critical areas where the SBA is falling short in its support of underserved communities.

First, SBA must do a better job of providing affordable capital to entrepreneurs from underserved communities.

SBA's various loan programs provide entrepreneurs with affordable capital to fund their businesses. These loans are especially important for underserved entrepreneurs, who typically have less wealth with which to fund a small business and have lower rates of business loan approvals.

Instead of filling in the gaps in the credit markets, SBA's highest volume loan program, the 7(a) Program, has mirrored the inequities in the market. That is something we need to address. Addressing this issue is important not only in Maryland, which, as I mentioned, has one of the most diverse small business communities in the country, it is vital for the future health of America's economy, considering that women and minorities are driving growth in new business formation.

According to a recent American Express study, the overall business ownership rate increased only 9 percent between 2014 and 2019. Over the same 5-year period, the number of women-owned businesses increased 21 percent—more than twice as fast as the overall rate—and the number of minority women-owned businesses grew by 43 percent.

It is clear that the underserved communities are driving the growth and business formation in America, and SBA's loan programs must catch up to this new reality.

Second, SBA must do all it can to increase opportunity for small business contractors. Recent trends paint an onerous picture of the future of small business contracting. A 2019 Bloomberg Government report found that despite a steady increase in government spending in the past several years, the Federal contracting marketplace is becoming less competitive, with the number of contractors working on unclassified contracts at a 10-year low. Small businesses are facing the brunt of this decrease, which is particularly troubling in Maryland, where Federal contracting accounted for 8 percent—roughly \$33 billion—of our State's GDP in 2018. The jobs created by these companies have helped thousands of families in Maryland enter the middle class.

The Senate has taken steps to help small contractors. I am proud to share that today SBA will begin implementing the Runway Extension Act—legislation I introduced that will allow small businesses to make critical investments to grow their businesses without fearing they will lose access to resources and Federal contracting opportunities.

But Congress alone cannot reverse the increasing insularity of the Federal contracting process; SBA must work with large agencies that are driving these trends in Federal contracting to ensure that small businesses are given opportunities to become prime contractors and supply the Federal Government.

Treasurer Carranza's prior experience should serve her well at the SBA. In nearly 30 years at UPS, where she began as a part-time package handler, Treasurer Carranza became the highest ranking Latina in the history of the company. She also served in government as Deputy Administrator of SBA under President George W. Bush, during which she chaired the SBA's Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization Council.

At a time when America's small businesses are experiencing rapid demographic changes and new challenges, SBA needs bold and innovative leadership. I am optimistic that Treasurer Carranza can be the leader and advocate that SBA and American small businesses need right now. I support her nomination. I urge my colleagues to approve her nomination as the SBA Administrator.

With that, I yield the floor.

EXECUTIVE SESSION—Continued

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Jovita Carranza, of Illinois, to be Administrator of the Small Business Administration.

Mitch McConnell, John Boozman, Joni Ernst, Kevin Cramer, David Perdue, Steve Daines, Thom Tillis, Roger F. Wicker, James E. Risch, Cindy Hyde-Smith, Lisa Murkowski, Pat Roberts, Richard C. Shelby, Deb Fischer, James Lankford, Chuck Grassley, Mike Rounds.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Jovita Carranza, of Illinois, to be Administrator of the Small Business Administration, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER), the Senator from Utah (Mr. LEE), and the Senator from Georgia (Mr. PERDUE).

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

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER), the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR), the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN), 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 yeas and nays resulted—yeas 86, nays 5, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote 1 Ex.]

YEAS—86

Baldwin	Feinstein	Peters
Barrasso	Fischer	Portman
Bennet	Gardner	Reed
Blackburn	Graham	Risch
Blumenthal	Grassley	Roberts
Blunt	Hassan	Romney
Boozman	Hawley	Rosen
Braun	Heinrich	Rounds
Brown	Hirono	Rubio
Burr	Hoeven	Sasse
Cantwell	Hyde-Smith	Schumer
Capito	Inhofe	Scott (FL)
Cardin	Johnson	Scott (SC)
Carper	Jones	Shelby
Casey	Kaine	Sinema
Cassidy	Kennedy	Smith
Collins	King	Stabenow
Coons	Lankford	Sullivan
Cornyn	Leahy	Tester
Cortez Masto	Loeffler	Thune
Cotton	Manchin	Tillis
Cramer	McConnell	Toomey
Crapo	McSally	Udall
Cruz	Menendez	Van Hollen
Daines	Moran	Warner
Duckworth	Murkowski	Whitehouse
Durbin	Murphy	Wicker
Enzi	Murray	Young
Ernst	Paul	

NAYS—5

Gillibrand	Merkley	Wyden
Harris	Schatz	

NOT VOTING—9

Alexander	Lee	Sanders
Booker	Markey	Shaheen
Klobuchar	Perdue	Warren

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 86, the nays are 5.

The motion is agreed to.

The Senator from Ohio.

UNITED STATES-MEXICO-CANADA TRADE AGREEMENT

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I rise to talk about an issue that the Senate may address on the floor this week.

Tomorrow in the Senate Finance Committee, we are going to take up the renegotiated North American Free Trade Agreement.

One of my proudest votes as a Member of the House a long time ago was to vote against the North American Free Trade Agreement, to vote against NAFTA. I have voted no on every trade agreement since then because every trade agreement that has come in front of this body was written by corporate interests for their corporate executives and stockholders. They maximize profits always—every one of these trade agreements—CAFTA, NAFTA, PNTR with China, which is not technically a trade agreement, but it quacks like a duck and walks like a duck. Every one of these trade agreements, in every

case, has looked out for corporate interests and jettisoned the interests of workers.

We see the consequences. Corporate profits soar every time. Executive compensation explodes upward every time. Workers continue to produce more than ever before. Even though corporate profits are up and executive compensation is up, workers' wages are flat. Often, they can't join a union, and the middle class continues to shrink.

I know what that has meant in the Presiding Officer's State of Arkansas. I know what it has meant in Ohio. I know what it has done to my hometown of Mansfield. I know what these trade agreements do to Dayton and Cleveland and Cincinnati and Canton and Youngstown and Toledo.

Then-Candidate Trump said that he was going to renegotiate NAFTA. Well, that was his promise. He did, but he gave us the same thing. His economic policies overall have been that, but his renegotiated NAFTA, which he brought to this Congress originally—the negotiation that he made with Mexico and Canada—was another corporate trade agreement written for corporate interests.

Again, this President betrays workers with his tax giveaways to corporations, to his judges who put their thumbs on the scale, choosing corporations over workers, choosing Wall Street over consumers.

Then, last year, as he has done one betrayal of workers after another, squeezing the middle class even more—last year, when we got the initial draft of this agreement from the administration, the renegotiated NAFTA was another betrayal.

His first NAFTA draft was nowhere near the good deal for workers that President Trump promised. He had fundamentally negotiated another corporate trade deal—a deal that helps corporate executives, that helps stockholders, that betrays workers again and again, another trade deal just like that. It meant nothing for workers. It meant a sellout to drug companies. It took us months of fighting alongside Speaker PELOSI and Senator WYDEN and trade unions to improve this deal and take the real and important steps toward putting workers at the center of our trade policies.

These trade policies should be written for workers so that they increase their income and expand the middle class, not written for corporations in trickle-down economics. We know what happens on every tax bill that comes before this Congress, written by the administration and Senator MCCONNELL. We know it is the same thing. Instead of building the economy from the middle out so that the middle class grows and America overwhelmingly prospers, just like the tax cuts—the tax cuts for the rich that may, they tell us, trickle down and help the middle class—that is the way this trade agreement was written. That is the way these tax bills in this Congress were written.

It took months of fighting alongside Senator WYDEN and organized labor and Speaker PELOSI. We now have a provision in the labor chapter, and the President has finally agreed to this provision. He knew he wasn't going to get a renegotiated NAFTA unless he followed what we said on workers. For the first time, we have a provision in the labor chapter.

For instance, it says that violence against workers is always a violation of the agreement. The language the President gave us said: Well, the first time you commit violence against workers, we might fine you. The second time, we might fine you. Only if you do it over and over is it a violation. Really? If there is violence against workers, the people who committed that violence ought to pay for it. So we fixed that in this agreement.

We have improved some of the legalese that since the beginning has been included in trade agreements to make it nearly impossible to successfully win a case when a country violates its labor commitments.

We secured the Wyden provision, which amounts to, by far, the strongest ever labor enforcement in the U.S. trade deal. This provision that Senator WYDEN and I wrote and fought for is the first improvement to enforcing labor standards in our trade agreements since we have been negotiating them.

We know why companies closed factories in Ohio and opened them in Mexico. They can pay lower wages. They can take advantage of workers who don't have rights. They can keep unions from organizing. American workers can't compete with that kind of low-wage lack of enforcement of labor laws. What happens? There is a race to the bottom on wages. So if a company threatens to move to Mexico and they tell their workforce "We are going to move unless you do some wage givebacks," they either move and the American workers lose their jobs or they use that as a way to put downward pressure on wages for American workers.

I know what that has done to Mansfield, OH. I know what it has done to Gallipolis, Chillicothe, Zanesville, Dayton, Huber Heights, and every other community. The only way to stop this is by raising labor standards in every country we trade with and, most importantly, making sure those standards are actually enforced. If corporations are forced to pay workers a living wage and treat them with dignity no matter where the workers are, we take away the incentive for those companies to move jobs abroad. That is what the Brown-Wyden provision does.

A worker in Mexico now, under this agreement—the reason I am supporting this, the first-ever trade agreement that I am supporting—workers in Mexico will be able to report a company that is violating their rights. They can actually call a toll-free number and report violations against the workers. A