

this week in support of getting this farm bill done.

We are already operating under a 1-year extension. So we are already 1 year past due getting a new 5-year farm bill in place.

As I say, farmers and ranchers from across the country are here talking to policymakers about the need to get this done rather than facing yet another yearlong extension.

Again, the message is very, very clear: We need to update the countercyclical safety net and crop insurance. That is the heart and soul. That is how our farmers manage risk. That is the key to getting a farm bill done.

As I mentioned, economic conditions in farm country continue to worsen. Last week, the farm income forecast from the USDA came out and indicated that lower commodity prices, high input costs, and elevated interest rates continue to create a real challenge for our producers.

For 2024, USDA is projecting net farm income, which is a broad measure of farm income, at \$140 billion, which is a decrease of \$6.5 billion from 2023.

Adjusted for inflation, the 2024 net cash farm income projections for crops like corn, soybeans, and wheat—important not only to my State but throughout the Midwest and beyond—represent the worst numbers that we have seen since the USDA began collecting this data for the past 15 years.

We have the opportunity to address that through the farm bill, and we need to do it. We need to get it done.

Senator BOOZMAN, who, as I mentioned, joined me in North Dakota several weeks ago, has put forward a framework for that farm bill. I think it does exactly what it needs to do: It provides that support that farmers and ranchers need.

Also in the House, the House Ag Committee chairman, GT THOMPSON, also has moved through their full Ag Committee a bill that I think works as well. So the framework in the Senate is there. The bill that has come out of committee in the House is there. The bill in the House needs some tweaks, but it is going in the right direction.

The reality is that we are in position to get it done, but we need to come together on a bipartisan basis and address updates to the reference prices in the countercyclical safety net, as well as the updates for the crop insurance we need, which I have put in a marker bill that lays out very clearly what needs to happen. We need to come to agreement on it. We need to get this farm bill done.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nebraska.

Mrs. FISCHER. Madam President, my home of Nebraska is home to an array of people, places, and pursuits. It is home to Husker football and the College World Series, our beautiful State capitol building in Lincoln, and our world-famous zoo in Omaha. Nebraska is home to plains and prairies and cities and small towns and to the breath-

taking natural beauty of the Nebraska Sandhills.

That unique beauty of the Nebraska Sandhills, where we raised our three sons, is where I began my travels last month during the August State work period. In total, I visited over 35 communities with over 100 stops, from Kimball to Blair and Red Cloud to Norfolk.

One visit especially near and dear to me was the Valentine Community Schools. Years ago, I served on the Valentine School Board, where I saw these schools up close and advocated for their improvements. The Valentine Community Schools are still doing great, educating bright kids who will go on to lead our State.

Farther west, I toured the Scottsbluff and Bridgeport schools. The Scottsbluff school system follows a career academy-focused curriculum, and I was impressed to see the creativity and innovation that educators are applying to that work. It is a testament to Nebraskans' dedication to progress in our local communities.

Along with the schools and educators across the State, I visited healthcare facilities and the doctors and nurses and medical professionals who keep them going.

When I toured CHI Health Good Samaritan in Kearney, NB, I heard about their incredible life flight capabilities. Rural Americans—well, they often live hours away from the nearest hospital, and in emergencies, that can be deadly. Good Samaritan is responding to those risks by life-fighting patients all across Nebraska and even into South Dakota at times.

While in Central Nebraska, I visited Kearney Police Department and the Buffalo County Sheriff's Department. These two departments share a really unique setup in the same building where they can collaborate and use a larger range of resources. By linking together Kearney and Buffalo County law enforcement, they are more efficient, and they do an excellent job in protecting their communities.

The August work period every year brings me fresh motivation and gratitude. I saw the ways that Federal legislation is creating real change in my home State. I saw progress all across Nebraska—in education, in healthcare, in law enforcement, in manufacturing, in agriculture, in economic development, and countless other sectors.

Most of all, I saw Nebraskans in their local communities dedicating their lives and dedicating their careers to investing in the people around them. Those are the people whom I represent here in the U.S. Senate. And just as they are dedicated to investing in Nebraska, I am dedicated to advocating for Nebraskans.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senator from Missouri, Senator SCHMITT,

and I each be permitted to speak for up to 5 minutes prior to the scheduled rollcall vote.

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

23RD ANNIVERSARY OF THE SEPTEMBER 11, 2001, ATTACKS

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, today is the 23rd anniversary of the tragic deaths of about 3,000 Americans at the World Trade Center and at the Pentagon, as well as in Shanksville, PA. It is a sobering and solemn day. And 9/11 is one of those occasions that you remember during your life because you remember where you were and what you were doing when the terrible tragedy came on the news. I remember I was on the telephone talking to my Governor, and my wife said: You need to see this. And I turned to watch the TV as the second plane hit the World Trade Center. We had no idea what was going on.

As I have often said, this day is a dividing line in our history. There is before 9/11, and then there is after 9/11. It is a reminder of our commitment as a country to carry out the promise that we made in the wake of the attack to never forget.

So, today, we remember the first responders who ran toward the danger, the families who lost loved ones, and the commitment of the U.S. Armed Forces to combat terrorism around the globe each and every day.

AUGUST WORK PERIOD

Madam President, on another matter, since the Senate gavelled out nearly 6 weeks ago, I, like the rest of my colleagues, have traveled all around our State. My State is a little bit bigger than the average State. We have 30 million people, 254 counties. I don't claim to have gone to all of them, but I tried my best to cover as much ground as I could.

Of course, it is a great opportunity to get outside the bubble of Washington, DC. And this is indeed a bubble. This is not the real world. I tell my constituents who come to Washington, DC—I say: This is like Disneyland. It is not real. It is fascinating, it is intriguing, and important things happen here, but it is not real.

What happens outside of this bubble, that is real. For example, at Memorial High School in Houston, TX, I joined online safety experts, education leaders, advocates, and parents to discuss more ways that we can help protect our children from online threats. This includes the Kids Online Safety Act and the Children and Teens' Online Privacy Protection Act, both of which passed the Senate with huge margins before we broke in August. I hope the House will take these nonpartisan, noncontroversial bills up soon.

I remember thinking—as I met with the principals and talked to some of the parents about what our young people are exposed to on their cell phones and online on a daily basis—that I am glad my daughters are grown because growing up is hard enough without

being under constant attack by people who want to entice you to do things that you should not do or share with you information you would just as soon not see.

Then I went to Austin, where I met with my former colleague on the Texas Supreme Court, Nathan Hecht, and Travis County District Judge Julie Kocurek. Judge Kocurek is actually a survivor of an assassination attempt. She was a district judge in Austin, TX, Travis County, and somebody who was a criminal defendant on her docket decided he wanted to assassinate her.

We met with her as well as other local leaders in a roundtable to try to figure out what we can do to try to keep our judges, our court personnel, and the public that needs to have access to our courts—how we can keep them safe. This includes my Countering Threats and Attacks on Our Judges Act, which passed the Senate in June and would establish a State judicial threat intelligence and resource center to provide technical assistance, training, and threat monitoring for State and local judges and court personnel.

We all know the Federal Government only handles a small fraction of what the judicial branch handles, and most of that is handled by the judiciary at the State level. So it is really important to provide best practices and resources to our judges, court personnel, and the public that needs to have access to courts and access to justice around our country.

I was then glad to join our good friend Senator JOHN BOOZMAN from Arkansas, who is the ranking member of the Senate Agriculture Committee, in the Rio Grande Valley. That is the southernmost tip in the middle of Texas, and it is one of the most prolific regions for agriculture in our State. We heard from farmers and ranchers about the importance of passing a timely and strong farm bill, and in particular we heard about the challenges they face because Mexico continues to withhold water that it owes the United States under a 1944 water treaty.

Then, in Round Rock, just outside of Austin, I visited with business leaders and community members on economic issues important to Central Texas, including the looming deadline to fund the Federal Government.

Then I had a chance to travel to Parkland Hospital in Dallas, TX. Parkland Hospital is famous because that is where John F. Kennedy was treated after he was shot, tragically, in Dallas. It is a huge, huge healthcare enterprise. I joined healthcare leaders, law enforcement, as well as two mothers who tragically lost their daughters to fentanyl poisoning, to discuss the impact of my Fight Illicit Pill Presses Act, which would have a positive impact on our efforts to eradicate this silent killer from our communities. I introduced this bipartisan legislation last month to make it easier for law enforcement to take action against

criminal cartels' use of illicit pill presses by requiring that those presses be engraved with serial numbers so that law enforcement can better track them.

While I am glad the online safety bills and my Countering Threats and Attacks on Our Judges Act have advanced out of this Chamber, there is still a lot of work that Senator SCHUMER, who sets the schedule in the Senate, has left until the last minute.

As I heard from my constituents about some of these events in the State, Texans are rightly concerned about the Senate's inaction on critical priorities like the farm bill and like additional legislation to combat the scourge of fentanyl poisoning. Fentanyl actually now is responsible and the main leading cause of death for Americans between the ages of 18 and 45 years old. Then, they are also worried about whether the government is going to remain open and be appropriately funded, and they understand the impact of short-term funding bills and its negative impact on our military and on our national security.

So that is why I don't understand why Senator SCHUMER continues to waste our time on show votes and ignore predictable deadlines that lead to inevitable drama about a potential shutdown when none of that is necessary. So I hope Senator SCHUMER will take advantage of the next 10 days that remain this month to do something about it rather than just kick the can down the road once again.

I yield to my colleague from Missouri.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. ROSEN). The Senator from Missouri.

23RD ANNIVERSARY OF SEPTEMBER 11, 2001,  
ATTACKS

Mr. SCHMITT. Madam President, before I get into my remarks, I would just like to say a few words on this 23rd anniversary of the September 11 attacks.

Twenty-three years ago, America and the world changed forever. We will never forget those who lost their lives, including the first responders who rushed into danger that day to save many lives. At a time when first responders are running into buildings and people are running out, we appreciate their sacrifice and their service.

May God bless and continue to bless this beautiful Nation and all that she stands for, now and forever.

AUGUST WORK PERIOD

Madam President, this August, I made a point to meet with and hear from Missourians across the State. These conversations are always valuable in my work here in Washington. They certainly influence the decisions and the votes cast right here on the Senate floor.

I was proud to host a roundtable with industry leaders in geospatial technologies and unveil my plan to attract more talent to St. Louis and transform the gateway city into the defense tech capital of the United States. Our

roundtable included representatives from a wide array of companies, universities, geospatial agencies—among them, NGA, TGI, Scale AI, and many others.

Geospatial technologies are critical to so many different industries, both civilian and military. Their application to defense technologies and GPS mapping cannot be overstated.

St. Louis is already home to the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency, which is building a new campus and working to revitalize North St. Louis, private investment through the Taylor Geospatial Institute, and other private and public geospatial and artificial intelligence assets. There is no reason St. Louis can't become the defense tech hub of our country, and that is why I am working to continue accomplishing that exact goal.

I was in Jefferson City to hear directly from advocates of those living with disabilities—stakeholders including the Missouri Developmental Disabilities Council, Special Olympics Missouri, and many other groups and individuals—on how we as lawmakers can better advocate for those with disabilities here in Washington.

This community has played an important role in my life over the years. I ran for office to help people like my son, Stephen, who has special needs. I earned political office to improve the lives of Missourians in our State, and that especially includes our most vulnerable citizens, whom I will never stop fighting for here in the U.S. Senate.

I also visited and toured Ranken Jordan Pediatric Bridge Hospital and their state-of-the-art facility, discussing all the advancements they were making in care services for children in the broader St. Louis community. This incredible facility is accomplishing great things for children and their families as they make the transition from the hospital to their homes.

I also spoke with the Sustainable Ozarks Partnership in Waynesville, MO, on the incredible work they do at Fort Leonard Wood and the surrounding community and not just for Missouri in that regard but for our country. Home to over 5,000 Active military members, many of whom collectively train nearly 80,000 service-members and civilians each year, Fort Leonard Wood is a proud military community that is absolutely vital to our Nation's military training, architecture, and our national security.

It is because of these great warriors that we remain a bright, shining beacon to the world of freedom and we can live and thrive in the greatest country there ever was. Places like Fort Leonard Wood has served as a critical role of training the next generation of American soldiers as they confront newer threats and never-ending threats abroad, among those, the Chinese Communist Party, North Korea, and Iran, because without strong leadership here at home, these hostile regimes will