

Now I will yield to my colleague from Nebraska.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nebraska.

Mr. RICKETTS. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, I echo my colleague from Arkansas' comments with regard to TikTok.

Let's recall that in communist China, there really isn't such a thing as a private company, as much as ByteDance might want to say it is.

The Chinese communist law is very clear that companies in China have to do what they are told to do by the Chinese Communist Party, and that is one of the reasons TikTok is so dangerous.

TikTok, as has been covered by my colleague from Massachusetts, reaches 170 million people; 52 percent of those people say that they regularly get their news from TikTok.

As I have risen on this floor in the past, I have discussed specific cases where the Chinese communists have been pushing their propaganda through TikTok.

Now, let's also bear in mind that we would not allow any American TV, news station—even newspaper—to be able to own as much of the American marketplace as TikTok has today—170 million people. Current law says that you can only own 39 percent, for example, of the TV marketplace across the country. That would roughly equate to about 50 million households in the United States—far above what we are seeing here with what TikTok has access to. So if we are not going to allow Americans to be able to have such broad access to our population, why on Earth would we allow the Chinese Communist Party to do it? And by the way, the Chinese Communist Party has no First Amendment rights in this country.

ByteDance was given 270 days to make a deal. The Communist dictator Xi Jinping clearly did not want it. They tried to lobby us. They avoided getting a deal done. President Trump came into office. They are still avoiding getting a deal done.

The people who are taking on the liability here are the companies that are the facilitators. I urge those companies to reconsider. You should think carefully about what you are doing. The law is very clear. TikTok needs to be sold to an American owner to continue operation, not some half-baked plan, as my colleague from Arkansas was describing, where the Chinese Communist Party would still have influence on the TikTok algorithm, still have the ability to push their propaganda to the American people. That cannot happen. We need to make sure that the Chinese Communist Party cannot do that in our country.

Again, we won't allow other TV or radio stations to have that much access. Why on Earth are we doing it with the Chinese Communist Party? It is absolutely ludicrous.

We need to keep the pressure on. We need to make sure that TikTok is sold.

I echo my colleague's comments with regard to any sort of future Chinese ownership that would allow them to be able to continue to do this. We need to make sure this is no longer going to threaten our young people.

Therefore, Mr. President, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

The Senator from Massachusetts.

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. President, I just want to reiterate what I said in my remarks—that ByteDance ownership in TikTok does create national security risks—but I also agree with my colleague. We just spoke. My colleague who just spoke said: Let's allow the President to continue to negotiate. Well, that is what my legislation does. It says that the President has out until October to negotiate a resolution that solves the national security-related issues. That time is needed because, in response to my colleague who said that he doesn't want a half-baked solution—well, that is what would happen if there was a rush to try to negotiate. So we need to give the President the legal space, passed by the Senate and the House, to be able to negotiate. That is all I am asking for.

What the President is doing right now is illegally extending the time, creating a cloud of legal jeopardy over all of the American companies which deal with TikTok right now.

So I think what I heard my colleague say was that they want to allow President Trump to negotiate, and that is what I am saying, except I am saying let's do it with the Senate having passed the legislation that gives him the time to do it in a very deliberate way so that the answer is not half-baked and that ultimately we can get to a resolution of this issue.

I will also note, by the way, that in a filing at the U.S. circuit court of appeals, that the intelligence community did, in fact, say that they have no information that the Chinese Government has, in fact, compromised this information that can be used against the United States at this point in time.

I would also add that I do agree with my colleague when he says that TikTok does prey upon young people, does contribute to mental health issues, especially amongst the teenagers and children in our society. But so does YouTube and so does Facebook and so does every one of the American sites.

So if we want to deal with the problem of social media creating problems for young people in our society, let's pass a law. Let's pass a tough law. That is the law that I have been able to get out of the Senate Commerce Committee. It is a tough law. It is the Child Online Privacy Protection Act, up to the age of 16, and it says to companies: If the parents want this, you have to delete any information you have gathered about the child. It says: You can't target a teenager or a child with ads.

Let's pass that law on the Senate floor, not just for TikTok but for the

American companies as well, which invented this targeting of children. That was invented here, the targeting of children, exploiting of teenagers, causing this mental health crisis in our Nation.

So it is time for us to, in my opinion, pass the legislation that has been objected to by my colleagues on the Republican side of the aisle so that the President has the time to negotiate with the Chinese, with TikTok, about the national security issues, so that there is a divestment that does work and provides real security for Americans.

But the next issue arises immediately because even if there is a divestment, that TikTok that is then American-owned, theoretically, is going to be targeting teenagers and children just the same way that every other American social media company does. Where is the concern about that? I hear it, but I don't hear any legislation coming out here on the floor from the Republican leadership to deal with the crisis, which everyone knows is front and center in our society right now.

So I think this debate really gives us a great opportunity to have a wider conversation about all of the impact social media is having upon our society.

With that, Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Indiana.

MAIDEN SPEECH

Mr. BANKS. Mr. President, it is the honor of my life to be here representing Indiana in the U.S. Senate. I want to start out thanking Hoosiers for sending me here to serve them, my State, and my country. It is an incredible honor. It is humbling and thrilling, truly, speaking on the floor of the U.S. Senate for the very first time.

You know, I grew up in a trailer park in Columbia City, IN, a small town of less than 10,000 people. I still live there today with my wife Amanda and our three young daughters, and, really, it is the best hometown in America.

But when I was a kid, we lived on the very south end of town, on a dead-end street with about a dozen trailers. I often drive by that boyhood home, and I point it out to my daughters, and I say: That is where I came from.

Unfortunately for them, it is on the way to school. So they hear me say that a lot, and they get annoyed every time I say it.

But I have a lot of great memories growing up in that trailer park. I remember my dad teaching me how to ride a bicycle in the cul-de-sac at the end of the street.

I remember his cream-colored Ford Bronco. The top would come off. He would wax it on the street and drive it around town. He was so proud of it.

I remember the bunkbed at the front of the trailer that I shared with my brother Chad. I remember the swing set in the side yard.

I remember deer hunting season. My dad would bring the buck home that he was proud of. We would can the meat, and we would live off it for the winter.

You see, my parents didn't have much, but they worked hard, and they provided for my two younger brothers and me.

My mom and dad were high school sweethearts. They didn't go to college. They had me at a young age. My mom started working when she was 13 years old at a local nursing home called Miller's Merry Manor, and she only recently retired from working there for most of her life.

My dad worked at a local Dane factory, where they made axles for cars and other vehicles. My uncle, my grandpa, many relatives, and many friends of our family also worked in that same factory. In fact, it was my grandpa, my mom's dad, who got my dad his job there when he started dating my mom.

When I was growing up, that factory provided good pay and opportunities for so many families in my community. During all three shifts, 24/7, the parking lot would be overflowing as workers earned a wage that was good enough to support their families. That was our American dream. Those were exactly the kinds of jobs that allowed my parents to put food on their table and raise their boys.

To so many Americans like my parents, the American dream isn't just some concept that think tank experts in Washington, DC, write about. It is real. It is what they have lived in their lives, like my mom and dad did, because to my mom and dad, the American dream is, if you work hard, then perhaps your kids might have a better shot than what you did.

I want to take a moment, like the Good Book says to do, and I want to honor my mom and my dad. It is because of them that I have lived the American dream. Look at where I am today: on the floor of the U.S. Senate, from humble beginnings in a small town in Northeast Indiana, the first of my family to go to college, and the great honor of wearing the uniform and serving my country.

I served my country in the U.S. House of Representatives and now here in this historic Chamber, the U.S. Senate. My oldest daughter Lillian is in the Gallery with us today. And just like my parents, I want my three daughters to be better off than what I was. That is the American dream.

This really is the greatest country in the history of the world. That American dream is always worth fighting and protecting.

But sadly, the country has changed a lot from when I was a kid growing up in that small town. There used to be plenty of those good-paying factory jobs like the one that my dad had, with pay that kept up with the cost of living and companies that treated their workers right.

It is no accident that a lot of those jobs have disappeared, and the working

class is falling further and further behind. You see, it is clear: It is the result of bad policy choices that put corporate and foreign interests ahead of those workers like my dad. Decades of America-last policies have hollowed out our industries and crushed our workers.

Wall Street shipped factories overseas and stripped our companies for quick profits. For a State like Indiana, the top manufacturing State in the country, that is a huge blow.

We have lost 6 million manufacturing jobs since 1980, while our population grew by over 117 million people. Like President Trump said last week, we have also lost more than 90,000 factories since NAFTA was signed. Adjusting for the value of the dollar, working-class wages for men haven't gone up at all. They earned about \$850 a week in 1980, and they still earn about \$850 a week today. About 600,000 jobs went to Mexico over two decades since NAFTA. In the 1980s, it took about 40 weeks of work for a factory worker to earn enough to support their family. Today, it takes about 62 weeks, which means those working-class families are growing debt and falling further and further behind.

For too long, empty lots, boarded-up buildings, and dead store fronts could be seen all over America because of the choices that our Nation's elites made. It was a tremendous failure of leadership. They opened up our borders, they cut wages for workers, and, as a result, cheap labor flooded into our country.

Indiana is also the top steel-producing State in the country, but the steel industry has shrunk by two-thirds. In 1980, the United States made one-sixth of the world's steel. Now that has dropped to one-twentieth.

Foreign companies have used their low wages and subsidies to dump cheap steel and take over our market, while American steel companies have struggled to keep up.

Today, America produces 1 percent of all of the cargo ships in the world. But in 1980, we made over 50 percent of them. It costs over double to build a ship in the United States than it does in China and South Korea, and they heavily subsidize their shipbuilding industries.

You see, in Columbia City, my small hometown, the best paying jobs are at a local steel mill called Steel Dynamics. A lot of guys I went to high school with, a lot of friends of our family work there today, and they do really well and provide for their families.

But we have lost way too many of those kinds of jobs around the country to China and foreign countries that have taken advantage of us and our workers. It was great to see leaders from that steel mill—Steel Dynamics—in the Rose Garden last week when I had a front row seat to celebrate President Trump's tariffs announcement, which will massively help our steel industry in places like Columbia City, IN. For too long, our leaders have

turned a blind eye when our enemies like China took those good-paying skilled jobs away from us.

One of the really memorable moments from the Rose Garden, last week, of President Trump for me was when he said that it is hard to fully blame foreign countries when it was the lack of leadership on our own part that allowed those countries to take advantage of America.

In fact, he kept pointing back to the Oval Office and saying that we are in the position that we are today because many of the men who sat in that office behind him did nothing while foreign countries took advantage of us and our workers.

President Trump understands, like we all do, that we can't pass the American dream on to the next generation if we let China dominate us. In fact, he is the first President of my lifetime to call China a threat to the American way of life. That is why I believe that letting China into the World Trade Organization was the worst economic mistake of my lifetime.

For too long, they have stolen our technology, they have copied our products, and they have built up their industries with slave wages that American workers can't and shouldn't have to compete with. No one has held them accountable until now. Too many of our leaders have been playing footsie with China instead of pushing back and standing up for our workers.

In 2001, our trade deficit with China was \$84 billion. By 2024, that deficit more than tripled to \$295 billion. Nearly 25 years ago, China accounted for 8 percent of the world's manufacturing output, but by 2020, that number has gone up by 35 percent.

The Chinese Communist Party wants to make the United States irrelevant in every key industry: steel, aluminum, nuclear power, AI, semiconductors, telecom, planes, ships, cars, and many more.

They are making us weaker and dependent. And here is the worst part about it: the CCP conned American investors into footing the bill. They rolled out the red carpet to corporate America, and Wall Street poured nearly \$1 trillion into Chinese companies that destroyed American jobs.

Some people believed naively that China would become freer, more open, and more like America; the complete opposite has happened. Now, they are our biggest adversary, and it is past time that we fight back.

During my time in the House, I made it my mission, my biggest priority to stand up to China, and only one President in my lifetime, once again, has understood that threat. In the U.S. Senate, I intend to help and stand with President Trump to stand up to China and put America first.

When President Trump first came down that escalator over 10 years ago, my dad, a retired union factory worker, was for him from day one. I wasn't so sure about it, but my dad knew that

Donald Trump was going to fight for the working class, and, boy, was he right.

President Trump tapped into the American people's hopes in a way that few leaders before him ever have. And that is why I was so inspired in just the first couple of weeks on the job as a U.S. Senator to be in that Rotunda for President Trump's inauguration when he talked about ushering in the golden age of America. It was so encouraging and inspiring to real people in real places like my hometown.

I feel like I am living through some of the best parts of our history, and I stand with President Trump in his commitment to put those working families first. He is removing the "kick me" sign from the backs of our workers and our producers. He is doing what the voters elected him to do, and he is keeping his campaign promises.

He is putting our attention on the issues that matter most to working Americans, like being able to afford a home, a car, groceries, education, and healthcare.

He is standing up against global companies that are selling out to our enemies, and he is bringing back a country that builds and makes things. Just last month, so important to Indiana, we heard that Honda is going to build their new Honda Civic in Indiana, not in Mexico. And last week, GM said that they would increase truck production just a few miles from my hometown in Fort Wayne. Our steel mills are roaring back to life. Our tech companies are hiring in America again.

And Eli Lilly, also based in Indiana, plans to invest \$27 billion in American manufacturing. So far in just 10 weeks, President Trump has announced \$6 trillion in new investment in the United States of America. That type of investment is helping to bring back the American dream for hard-working Americans.

On election day this past November, I took what ended up being a long and nostalgic walk with my dog Marshall. He is named after Thomas Riley Marshall, the 28th Vice President of the United States, who is also from my small hometown.

In fact, his Vice Presidential statue is right outside the west door as you enter this Chamber. In fact, on election day, we walked right past his home, which today is a museum in his honor to his history. When I was in elementary school, we would go to field trips to the museum, and the teachers would say: Look what this guy did coming from a small town like this. If you work hard and dream big, maybe you can do something like that too.

I went on this dogwalk with Marsh, and we walked past the museum, we walked past the courthouse and the town square in my hometown. We walked past the hot dog stand that was where I had my first job as a teenager, and then we ended up in that trailer park that I mentioned earlier where I grew up.

I have driven past it many times, but it was the first time that I have actually gone through alone and walked through and down this street since I was a kid. It was just a couple of hours before the news would call my race and name me the Senator-elect for the great State of Indiana, so this was rather an emotional experience for me. As memories of my childhood flooded back, I realized how incredible of a life and opportunity that I have been given.

But as we were walking down that street, I noticed a mom sitting on the steps of her trailer, smoking a cigarette, watching her two boys in the yard who would have been about the same age as my brother and I would have been when we lived in that trailer park too. As I watched them, I couldn't help but wonder if those boys would be able to achieve what I did or if the deck was so stacked against them today that that kind of opportunity for them was way out of reach.

Later that evening as the results from election night poured in, it became apparent to me that America decided to turn the page to a new chapter for this great country. And as someone who has lived the American dream, I have got great news for those boys and their mom: The golden age of America is here.

It has only been 5 months since election day when I took that walk, and we have already seen a major shift for hard-working Americans. For too long, Washington has not cared about people like those boys and that mom, but I do. And I know that all of you do, and I know that President Trump does too.

As leaders in this country, we have a duty to fight for those boys and those moms like her for their American dream.

To my Republican colleagues and my colleagues across the aisle, we must stand together more than ever before to fight for those working families.

It is going to take everyone in this Chamber working together to do it. There is so much in this fight that we can all agree on as Republicans and Democrats, and now is the time for leadership of both parties to step up for American workers and families.

We are kicking off a new era of peace and prosperity like we have never seen before. Again, Indiana, thank you for this incredible opportunity. To my colleagues, it is a privilege to serve with you. I am so excited about what lies ahead.

I yield the floor.

(Applause.)

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Indiana.

TRIBUTE TO JIM BANKS

Mr. YOUNG. Mr. President, I am thrilled to be in the audience for my colleague's maiden speech.

Senator BANKS just delivered inspired words. And he gave a speech from his heart as well as his head, and those are always the best received.

It is really—he has an amazing life story. He is a great public servant. I

know his family is very proud of him. I know his hometown in Northeastern Indiana are very proud of him, people throughout the great State of Indiana and really beyond, and I am proud of him.

I have known Senator BANKS for a lot of years, and we have long been friends. And it is really remarkable what he has done up to this point in his professional career and what he is going to do.

I want to thank JIM and his family for taking this step. It is not always easy serving in a public capacity. I want to welcome him formally to the U.S. Senate in front of the world, and I know Amanda is watching. Amanda, thank you so much for your service to this country. Sometimes it is like being the preacher's wife. You are not always given the credit that you are due. But certainly my colleagues here understand the sacrifices that are made as your husband serves the State of Indiana.

So I am glad you are here, JIM. We have a lot in common. We are both IU basketball fans. We both have a degree from Indiana University. We are both veterans. We both have three beautiful daughters, and one of yours is here. Lillian, thank you for visiting and being part of this important moment.

So I will just tell the world and to certainly my colleagues that JIM BANKS is committed, committed to making our economy work for everyone. JIM BANKS is committed to making sure that we satisfy our responsibilities of keeping the American people safe and secure by taking care of our warfighters and giving them all they need.

And, JIM, if you are up to it, and I think you are, we are going to do some amazing things together on behalf of the people of Indiana. We are going to have to right some wrongs from the past—you alluded to that—rethink some preconceived notions that require rethinking, and offer solutions. And we will work together on that and drive those solutions to outcomes.

More on that later, but I am just so appreciative to have you here, and I thank you for your words.

I yield the floor.

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

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I, too, just want to welcome, officially—now that he has delivered his maiden speech—Senator BANKS from the great State of Indiana. Like his colleague Senator YOUNG, I, too, have had the opportunity to observe, and one thing I really appreciate about Senator BANKS is he obviously served his country as a Member of the House of Representatives; he served his country in the military; he was deployed abroad.

He is a veteran, and he is passionate about serving causes that are greater than himself. And that is a family passion, a partnership he and Amanda have and his girls. And I am just grateful that they are willing to roll up