



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 119th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 172

WASHINGTON, THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 2026

No. 26

Senate

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session and resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will read.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Brian Charles Lea, of Tennessee, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Tennessee.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The great Senator from Iowa.

NORTH AMERICAN UNITED STATES-MEXICO-CANADA AGREEMENT

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, this year marks 6 years since the President and Congress approved the North American U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement—USMCA for short. It is also the year that the three countries will review the agreement and decide on its future. That 6-year review is part of the agreement itself, so it must be done. So I would like to review the USMCA's impact in the first 6 years.

The agreement has really enhanced U.S. exports, so President Trump has hailed the trade deal as “a colossal victory for [Iowa] farmers, ranchers, energy workers, factory workers, and American workers in all 50 states.”

What President Trump said there was 100 percent on target when he made that statement about the value of the USMCA to the U.S. economy.

Since 2019, U.S. agriculture exports have increased by almost \$35 billion, and nearly half of that \$35 billion was from just two countries—Canada and Mexico.

After 10 years of relative stagnation before the agreement, U.S. agriculture exports to Mexico shot up by \$11 billion between 2019 and 2024 to over a total of \$30 billion. Today, Mexico is the No. 1 market for U.S. corn, and around one-third of all U.S. agriculture exports go to either Canada or Mexico.

Remember I said Mexico is the No. 1 market for U.S. corn? Iowa, my State, is the No. 1 producer of corn, so you know how that benefits the farmers of Iowa.

To summarize, the U.S. agriculture exports pie has gotten bigger, and the biggest slices have been for Canada and Mexico because of the USMCA. This means bringing home more bacon for Iowa farmers. When I mention bacon, Iowa is also the No. 1 pork producer of the 50 States.

So what I have just said to you is why it is necessary to continue the great economic environment that the USMCA has produced for the United States. In other words, it is a no-brainer to get the USMCA extended and get it done very, very soon.

President Trump needs to speak forcefully about the success of the USMCA, along the same lines of the quote that I gave you earlier in my speech. We know it is his strong position; it should be easy to restate that to everybody. His positive words will take the uncertainty out of whether this agreement will be extended, and if it is not extended, there will be great economic loss to the United States. Uncertainty doesn't help anybody's economy. Such uncertainty is holding back our economic growth.

I yield the floor.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

APPROPRIATIONS

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, we have 1 week and 1 day left to pass the Department of Homeland Security appropriations bill. Democrats demanded a tight timeline for the DHS continuing resolution. Republicans warned Democrats repeatedly that such a short timeline would be challenging, if not impossible, but to prevent Democrats from shutting down a big part of the government and denying paychecks to soldiers and Federal workers, we ultimately gave it to them.

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. GRASSLEY).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal God, we come to You for protection, mercy, and love. You have been our shelter through the storms of life, and Your wisdom has been our shield from seen and unseen dangers. Thank You for being a helper for the helpless, placing us beyond the reach of the enemies of freedom.

Bless our lawmakers as they remember that each day has enough trouble of its own. Give them the wisdom to live in day-tight compartments, to trust You to be their guide, and to place all of their tomorrows in Your mighty hands.

Strengthen us all to lift downcast lives, grieving spirits, and hopeless hearts.

We pray in Your matchless Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MULLIN). Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

• This “bullet” symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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Now the onus is on Democrats to negotiate in good faith and reach an agreement quickly. Notice I said “negotiate.” This is not a blank-check situation where Republicans just agree to a list of Democrat demands.

Democrats had previously agreed to a Homeland Security appropriations bill which included additional money for body cameras as well as deescalation training for Immigration and Customs Enforcement officers and additional oversight of funds that have already been appropriated to DHS. Those were all things that were agreed upon when that bill was initially negotiated and supported by Democrats in the House and Senate.

Well, now they have reopened negotiations, and that means taking up ideas and priorities from both sides. We need to have a serious discussion about the climate of harassment—and worse—that law enforcement officers have been facing for simply trying to do their jobs.

We also need to address the issue of cooperation between local and Federal law enforcement. Too many jurisdictions prohibit local law enforcement from cooperating with Immigration and Customs Enforcement, a situation that makes things more dangerous for everyone.

The President’s border czar Tom Homan yesterday announced that the Department of Homeland Security will be withdrawing 700 Federal agents from Minnesota, in large part, because of cooperation from local law enforcement. So I hope my Democrat colleagues are ready to have some conversations with the White House about these and other issues.

The White House has demonstrated that it is taking things seriously, and it has already resulted in body cams for all officers deployed to Minneapolis and, as I said, the drawdown of Federal agents thanks to the increased cooperation with local law enforcement that Tom Homan has facilitated.

I want to see my Democrat colleagues take things seriously as well. I would also like to remind Democrats that they are putting funding for some critical Federal Agencies in jeopardy. TSA, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the Coast Guard, the Secret Service, the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center are all funded by the DHS appropriations bill.

I think all Americans remember the travel disaster Democrats created by shutting down the government for 43 days last fall. Should Democrats fail to agree to a DHS funding bill and shut down the TSA as a result, there is a very good chance we could see more travel problems. I would also like to remind my Democrat colleagues that the only way to get any reforms at ICE is to agree to a bill. A CR would not include any of the reforms already included, as I said earlier, in the DHS bill, which they helped negotiate and supported before they changed their mind and didn’t support it.

And a CR certainly wouldn’t include any new reforms. The Democrat leader was complaining about the announcement about body cams for Federal officers in Minneapolis, asking why it wasn’t for the whole country. Well, I would like to remind him that the DHS bill we negotiated already includes money for additional body cams—somewhere on the order of \$20 million for additional body cameras.

The Democrat leader also complained he doesn’t trust the administration’s reforms and that we need a law. Well, getting a law is well within the Democrats’ power, but, again, Democrats have to be willing to actually reach an agreement.

If they are coming to the table demanding a blank check or refusing to consider any measures but their own, they are likely to end up with nothing, which is fine if Democrats just want a political issue.

But if they actually want to do something, then, again, they are going to have to be willing to reach agreement with the White House on a final bill. One week and one day more, that is the timeline that the Democrats demanded, and I say “demanded” and actually got. They were granted.

After having negotiated a six-bill package, which included the DHS appropriations bill, they decided, no, we are not going to do that. People want to blame the White House. They want to blame Republicans. Republicans had nothing to do with that. It passed the House, the six-bill package, including the DHS appropriations bill, with 341 votes in the U.S. House of Representatives. Almost 80 percent of the entire House had cleared the DHS appropriations bill that was included in the package that the Senate was going to vote on that the House had already passed.

And then it came over here, and the Democrats decided to blow it up. All of a sudden, the bill that they helped negotiate and write and be a part of, which included all the reforms that I mentioned—deescalation training, body cameras—all those things were included in the bill that they said they didn’t then want to pass.

So they wanted a separate discussion about those issues and demanded that if we didn’t give them that, they weren’t going to vote for the package.

And so they got what they wanted. And then we had a debate about how long should the CR go for to allow the sides to come together behind an agreement. And I suggested—our side suggested—that perhaps 6 weeks would be a sufficient amount of time to have an earnest negotiation with all the parties at the table and then time to execute actually passing whatever is agreed upon across the floor of the House and the Senate and getting it on the President’s desk.

The Democrats demanded a 2-week CR or they wouldn’t vote for the package. And so they got what they wanted, which is a 2-week continuing resolu-

tion to fund the Department of Homeland Security and the other things I mentioned—FEMA, TSA, Coast Guard, all those things—for 2 weeks. And yet they haven’t appeared yet to want to negotiate on all the things that they are demanding.

They put out a list of demands yesterday. Our team, our folks, have tried to get with them to sit down at the table and with the White House to reach an agreement that would enable the Department of Homeland Security appropriations bill to actually be passed here in the Senate and the House and sent to the President. But that is not, right now, even in the realm of possibility because they are not engaging.

We have got a now 1 week and 1 day timeline in which to do this, which is entirely unrealistic and a Democrat Party, both in the House and the Senate, which seems a lot less interested in getting a solution to this than they do in having a political issue.

If, for some reason, the Department of Homeland Security ends up in a shutdown, it is going to be totally on them. They will own it. We have tried repeatedly, they have agreed repeatedly, before they decided not to agree and to demand something else, which they also got. But as of right now, we aren’t anywhere close to having any sort of an agreement that would enable us to fund the Department of Homeland Security, and so I would hope that the Democrats will come to the table.

The timeline that they asked for has been granted, and I hope that they are finally ready to get this done. It is important for the American people. All of these Agencies, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, which oversees disasters in this country—we have a number of weather-related disasters in this country that are going to require the able attention of FEMA—a lot of important Agencies that won’t get funded if they remain in this posture of resisting anything that doesn’t give them all of their demands.

But worse yet, not only insisting on all the demands, most of which are, as they know, very unrealistic and unserious, but perhaps even more important than that, at least as of right now, they are not willing to engage in a negotiation and discussion to try and reach a result.

I hope that changes. I want to get this done. We want to get this done. I hope that there are Democrats who also want to get this done, and I know the President of the United States is prepared to sign a bill once these negotiations get underway and reach an agreement.

I yield the floor.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, for months—for months—Americans have watched in horror as ICE agents have stopped acting like law enforcement