

Even nominees with the support of both home State Senators are being held up.

The high level of judicial vacancies across the country puts at risk the ability of all Americans to have a fair hearing in court.

I yield the floor.

With that, I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume legislative session.

RUSSIA AND MOLDOVA JACKSON-VANIK REPEAL AND SERGEI MAGNITSKY RULE OF LAW ACCOUNTABILITY ACT OF 2012

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate proceeds to consideration of H.R. 6156, which the clerk will report by title.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 6156) to authorize the extension of nondiscriminatory treatment (normal trade relations treatment) to products of the Russian Federation and Moldova and to require reports on the compliance of the Russian Federation with its obligations as a member of the World Trade Organization, and for other purposes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will now be 10 minutes of debate equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees.

The Senator from Montana.

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, we will soon be voting on whether to establish permanent normal trade relations—otherwise known as PNTR—with Russia and Moldova and to update human rights legislation on Russia.

We have to take many difficult votes in this Chamber, but this is not one of them. In fact, this is a rare opportunity to pass a good bill on which we all can agree.

PNTR is good for U.S. jobs. Russia is a fast-growing market. When Russia joined the WTO in August, it opened its markets to the other 155 members of the WTO who have PNTR with Russia. PNTR will give U.S. farmers, ranchers, businesses, and workers new opportunities in Russia and new jobs at home.

Our competitors in China, Canada, and Europe are now taking advantage of these opportunities because they have PNTR with Russia. They already have it. We are the only WTO member missing out on these opportunities. If we now pass PNTR, we could level the playing field and compete. If we compete, we will win. We will sell more

beef, we will sell more aircraft, we will sell more tractors, and we will sell more medical equipment. Our banks and insurance companies will grow. PNTR will give our knowledge industries greater protections for their intellectual property, and our farmers will have new tools to fight unscientific trade barriers. If we pass PNTR, American exports to Russia are expected to double in 5 years. This bill has strong enforcement provisions to help ensure that American farmers, ranchers, businesses, and exporters get the full benefit of PNTR. This bill has strong human rights provisions. Senator CARDIN's Magnitsky Act punishes human rights violations in Russia and helps to address the corruption problems Russia now faces.

In July, the Finance Committee voted unanimously, 24 to 0, in favor of PNTR legislation. Last month, the House of Representatives passed the PNTR legislation now before us with 365 "yes" votes. Now we need to act to pass this bill that supports U.S. jobs. Let's take advantage of this opportunity to take a good vote on a good bill. I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of giving U.S. workers and businesses a chance to compete and vote in favor of the PNTR.

I thank my colleague from Utah, Senator HATCH. He is a great person, and we have worked very closely. The two of us have worked together, and we made a good team to get this legislation passed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. HAGAN). The Senator from Utah.

Mr. HATCH. Madam President, I want to praise the distinguished chairman of the committee. He has done a wonderful job, and, of course, he has been a pleasure to work with.

This bill marks an important step forward in our relations with Russia and Moldova. Once this bill is signed into law, our workers, job creators, and farmers will be able to take full advantage of Russia and Moldova's accession to the WTO.

The bill includes strong enforcement provisions to ensure that Russia lives up to its international trade obligations. Finally, this bill will help advance human rights and the rule of law in Russia.

Today's vote would not be possible without the combined efforts of many dedicated public servants. First, I would like to thank the staff at the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative. Many of them toiled for years to bring Russia and Moldova into the WTO, often at great personal sacrifice.

I also would like to take a moment to thank my colleagues for all of their hard work in helping to craft this bill. An open and transparent dialogue was critical to our success. And I would particularly like to again express my appreciation to all the Republican members of the Finance Committee who worked with me and my staff in good faith to develop a strong enforcement package which will address many

of the concerns we all have regarding our bilateral trade relations with Russia.

Finally, I would like to thank my friend and colleague, Senator BAUCUS, and his wonderful staff because he and his staff have had a great willingness to work with us to make sure our concerns were addressed in the bill. At the conclusion of my remarks I will provide for the RECORD a list of names of staff members from both our offices.

The process we undertook in the Finance Committee is emblematic of how the Finance Committee should work. It is my sincere hope this will be a model for future legislation. Working together, I am confident we can continue to develop policies to grow our economy through international trade and, hopefully, help advance the rule of law around the world. This is a good package that deserves our strong support. I urge all of my colleagues to join me in supporting this bill.

I believe we have to do more in the international trade world. Earlier, due to the efforts of the distinguished chairman, Senator BAUCUS, and his staff and my staff, we were able to get the Korean, Colombian, and Panamanian treaties through. These were steps in the right direction for all of these years, and to have this happen is going to be a wonderful thing, I think, for our country and for Russia itself, and it certainly is going to help us go down the line in doing what is best for our own trade.

One of the other special things that is in this is it is going to cause Russia to have to live up to some international trade and intellectual property laws. We in this country believe in obeying those laws, and I have to say Russia, India, and China have invaded intellectual property in areas they shouldn't have. Hopefully, this type of agreement, PNTR, will help alleviate that problem.

So I urge my colleagues to join Senator BAUCUS and I in voting for this very important bill. Again, I thank staff on both sides for the wonderful work they have done and the Trade Representative in his office, as well, for the wonderful work they have done.

I reserve the remainder of my time.

HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSERS

Mr. MERKLEY. Madam President, we are about to take a momentous step forward in promoting human rights abroad thanks to my good friend from Maryland. Here is a bill that promotes a robust trade relationship while at the same time using this relationship to advance a very just cause: punishing past human rights abusers and inhibiting would-be human rights abusers.

Mr. CARDIN. I couldn't agree more with my friend from Oregon. As some of my colleagues know, I am the original sponsor of Sergei Magnitsky Rule of Law Accountability Act, the standalone bill that then became the human rights title in this combined PNTR bill. I am enormously proud of the work we have done on the bill, and I