

Ethanol Board, our ethanol plants provide over 1,300 good-paying jobs to Nebraskans, and this creates a \$5 billion impact on our State. As I have said before, for Nebraska and much of the heartland, restricting the year-round sale of E15 was equivalent to benching our best player during the most important game of the season.

For years, I have been fighting to put an end to this unnecessary ban that has restricted our farmers, retailers, and consumers for far too long. In 2017, I introduced the Consumer and Fuel Retailer Choice Act, with the senior Senator from Iowa, to put an end to this decades-old regulation. The bill sought to extend the Reid vapor pressure waiver to ethanol blends above 10 percent.

At the same time, I began holding very productive discussions with President Trump on the importance of E15 to the people of Nebraska but also to the people of rural America. The President agreed that this commonsense solution was needed. Last year, I was very proud to join him at the White House as he directed the EPA to allow for the year-round sale of E15.

Yesterday we turned a new page as President Trump's directive officially became a reality for farmers and ethanol producers. It was great to accompany the President, Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue, and EPA Administrator Andrew Wheeler to deliver this encouraging news.

We landed at Offutt Air Force Base in Nebraska and headed to the SIRE ethanol plant in Council Bluffs, IA. There, we heard President Trump give a speech highlighting the essential role of our farmers, ranchers, and the ethanol industry. We also heard from a few Nebraskans on how this is impacting them.

The first speaker was Kevin Ross. He is from Iowa. He is a sixth-generation farmer, and he is vice president of the National Corn Growers Association. He said:

I work in the greatest industry we have in this country, and that's agriculture. We are blessed by God to have the science that has let us achieve new heights in production. Whether that's yield of corn, the efficiency of this ethanol plant, or gains in my cattle, agriculture continues to do more with less. . . . The economic benefits and the clean air delivered through biofuels are wins for the seventh generation on my family farm and wins for all U.S. citizens.

Another guest speaker was Randy Gard. He is the chief operating officer of Bosselman Pump & Pantry and Bosselman Enterprises, located in my State of Nebraska at Grand Island. He said:

Today is a great day for the American farmer, the ethanol industry, fuel retailers, and the American consumer.

After consulting with their customers, this company started offering E15 fuel a few years ago. Mr. Gard continued:

We started to install the infrastructure, started to put all the marketing information behind it, and we came up with something

fairly simple but compelling. We said E15 is simply better fuel and it costs less. . . . It was easy for our employees at our stores to articulate, easy for our customers to understand, and it must have worked because in 2017, our sales of E15 increased over 300 percent. In 2018, they went up another 225 percent. And with the help of President Trump opening the door for year-round E15, our newest projections for this year show an increase of another 400 percent.

Hearing the confidence of Nebraskans is encouraging, and this is why I have been determined to make the year-round sale of E15 a reality for them.

The nets that have constricted innovation and market expansion in rural America for far too long have now been cut, and the news couldn't come at a better time for our farmers and for our rural communities.

Last March brought unimaginable setbacks due to the historic flooding that ravaged through Nebraska and large regions of the Midwest. On top of higher input costs, tighter margins, and decreased commodity prices, these factors have created anxiety for our farm families. The lift of the year-round ban on E15 gives ag producers some much needed certainty during these very difficult times.

America's consumers and retailers will also reap the benefits. They will no longer face confusion at the pump, as E15 will be labeled consistently, regardless of the season. With more competition in place, consumers can make the best fuel decision for their families and for their wallets. Retailers will no longer need to make those unnecessary, expensive adjustments to their infrastructure every year to accommodate for this regulation.

The year-round sale of E15 implementation comes on the heels of more great news. EPA Administrator Wheeler recently announced that he signed a final rule which will implement legislation that I was proud to champion, the Fair Agricultural Reporting Method Act, also known as the FARM Act.

This bipartisan legislation protects farmers, ranchers, and livestock markets from misguided, burdensome EPA reporting requirements. Due to regulations that were originally meant to address industrial pollution, chemical plant explosions, and the release of toxic materials into the environment, farmers faced uncertainty about reporting animal waste emissions on farms and ranches and other operations.

These reporting regulations were not intended to affect livestock or animal agriculture. Yet our agriculture industry worried about this unnecessary burden for years. I have heard time and again directly from Nebraska's farmers and ranchers on how these regulations were cause for concern.

The FARM Act implementation delivers a permanent fix to this issue by providing ag producers with exemptions to animal waste reporting requirements.

In closing, I want to thank the bipartisan group of my Senate colleagues

whose years of determined efforts paved the way for the fruition of these important measures, and I want to offer my sincere thanks to President Trump for following through on his commitment to rural America.

I look forward to seeing the positive results that these commonsense, bipartisan measures will bring to hard-working men and women in the good life and throughout America's heartland. I am proud to fight on behalf of Nebraska's farmers, ranchers, and ag producers, who continue to fuel and feed the world.

Thank you.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. BLACKBURN). The Senator from Missouri.

#### BORDER SECURITY

Mr. BLUNT. Madam President, I want to talk a little bit about the border—not the important need to secure the border, which I am for, but I want to talk about the humanitarian crisis we have seen occurring at the border. Frankly, the Senate and the House—the Congress—have been watching that occur for too long.

It has been several weeks now since the administration notified Congress that the money that was allocated for what would have been a traditional set of challenges at the border is about to be spent and that there is no money left for some of these issues we have to deal with at the border in a particular way.

We have seen the flood of people approaching the border to be not only incredibly different in numbers but incredibly different in context. Probably 20 years ago, 90 percent of the people who came across the border were coming directly from Mexico.

By the way, when that happened, the law was changed so that if they came across from Mexico, you could send them right back to Mexico. Hopefully, our neighbors in Mexico are working with us to still have some potential to do that with people who come across the border and come through Mexico—not necessarily Mexican in their nationality but come through Mexico to the border—to go back and wait for what needs to happen for their case to be heard in Mexico rather than here.

Most of the people coming today are coming from Central America—Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras. In the last year, I think the principal place that has people coming to our southern border—over 1 percent of the population of all three of those countries has come from those countries collectively.

Clearly it is a problem, but it is especially troubling to look at the numbers of children who are coming to the border unaccompanied. Just last month, about 130,000 people came to the border. You can multiply that by 12 pretty quickly and see 1 million people or more coming to our border to come in without the right kinds of documents. Another million, by the way, come into

our country through the normal process. We have about 1 million immigrants a year who legally immigrate to the United States. We are not a country that does not want people from other countries to come here; we just want them to come here based on the law and the requirements for everybody else who would like to come to the United States.

Of that 130,000 people who came in May, 11,507 of them were children without families. It is really important for us to understand as we discuss this that we are not talking about children who came with their families and were separated from their families once they got here. There are plenty of those children coming right now with families because it is pretty clear that saying you want asylum and saying you have children with you and your family is one of the things that check a couple of boxes that more likely will have you in the United States waiting for your case to be heard sooner rather than later. But these are 11,507 children who came by themselves. About 30 percent of them are under 12, and about 70 percent of them are between 12 and 18.

You have 11,000 children coming a month. We think in the calendar year, that will be about 88,000 children—not in the calendar year but in the fiscal year, the spending year, the year that started October 1. We already believe that number is going to approach 88,000.

Usually, within 72 hours of those children showing up at the border by themselves, the Department of Homeland Security transfers them to the Department of Health and Human Services, which is much better positioned to take care of them than they otherwise would be. The Department of Health and Human Services enters into agreements with Lutheran charities, Catholic charities, and other groups—almost always not-for-profit—that would provide shelter on a clearly understood basis. This is something where HHS knows the kinds of housing these children are going into, provides shelter, provides medical care, and provides other services, such as education, that are provided by these groups that contract with us. As part of their goal, they also make an effort to find a safe and appropriate place as soon as possible for these kids to be with relatives who are already in the country or an alternative that would be appropriate.

Of the 14,000 or so spaces that we have—beds is one way to look at this, places to sleep—people are going into and out of those as soon as we can find somewhere safe for them to go. So, ideally, children would stay a very short time in one of these facilities while the Department of Health and Human Services, working with that security provider—security for the children—finds a sponsor. Again, it is usually a family member. But other people stay a long time.

The older teenagers tend to be harder to place, frankly. For some of the Cen-

tral American countries, they don't have the family connections that immigrants at the border have had in the past, so there is no family to put them with. Some of these older teenagers wind up staying longer than they would want to or that we would hope that they would have to, but it is just the way it is.

Of those 11,507 kids who came to the border in the month of May, a few of them may have been in the facility for less than a day. Some of them may still be in the facility they went to because there is nowhere safer than that for them to go right now.

The problem is that Health and Human Services is running out of space, and they are also running out of money. In April, Secretary Azar, the head of Health and Human Services, came to Congress and said: I just want to give you a warning. We are going to be out of money on this current pace by sometime in June.

By the way, we are now in June, and Congress has not stepped up and done what is necessary to take care of these kids.

Let's think about all the alternatives that can happen. One of the alternatives is you just provide less assistance. Maybe the education goes first and the recreation time goes second, and you wait longer to get into the transitional space that we would want you to be in, and you are waiting more than 72 hours.

The other alternative is totally unacceptable, which would be what you would do with people who are over 18. You say: OK, if you are 18 or 28 or 38, we will hear your case at some future time. We are going to release you into the United States, and you come back at a future time, and we will hear whether there is merit. We will decide your case at that time.

Well, you can't release a 12-, 13-, or 14-year-old boy or girl into the United States and hope that is going to be a good thing for them to have happen to them. With the inadequate funding, they stay in facilities with the Border Patrol longer than anybody would want them to.

As I said, the administration estimates that by the end of September—that would be the end of our spending year, the one we have allocated money for—there will be about 88,000 kids who have come across the border by themselves, and the American people would want you to take care of them until you can find a safe place for them to be. No thinking American would say: Well, just let them go back across the border by themselves. Let them out in the United States and see what happens to them. Nobody would think that.

That is 88,000. The previous high was 59,000 in 2016. It looks like already we are probably just about to get to that number right now. With the time between now and September 30 left in the spending year, we have already had more kids come than we had in the previous high year.

Congress, which appropriated money for what we thought would probably be no more than 59,000 kids during the course of the year, didn't appropriate enough money. So we knew we might not appropriate enough money, so we had a transfer authority, where you could take some money—up to a certain amount—from other accounts, and you could transfer that into the account to take care of more kids than we would have thought. That money is gone too.

The Department is being forced to cut back on some of the things they have tried to provide for children who have come into our care through certainly no fault of ours and maybe not much fault of theirs—redirecting money from programs like refugee programs that are designed to help people who come truly as refugees. That money is now being used for unaccompanied children.

Remember, Health and Human Services is legally required to take care of these children but is also legally required not to spend money they don't have. If Congress doesn't act quickly—and we intend to act on this bill within a week—HHS, the Department of Health and Human Services, will have to tell the grantees—these normally not-for-profit organizations—well, if you just keep taking care of these kids, at some point we will give you the money we had agreed to give you to take care of these kids. But between now and then, you spend the money and hope you will be reimbursed. It is kind of like a government shutdown, except just for this one group of people—unaccompanied children. It is a government shutdown. There is going to be no money available. These critical services—you go to the outside groups that have been willing to step forward and provide shelter, and you say: Just keep providing the shelter, and we will pay you if we can. Some of these groups may have all kinds of money and be able to afford to do that. My guess is, not so much so, and not many of them will have.

So we need to step up. We need to adapt to this change in circumstances that we didn't anticipate. We anticipate that as many people might come as has ever come before, but we didn't anticipate that maybe 30 percent more people would come in this category than ever came before.

In the disaster bill we just passed—by the way, this is a shameful thing to have to say—it took over 8 months for Congress to cover the disasters that Congress has normally covered right away. Health and Human Services has asked for money in an emergency funding situation to take care of this. Congress should take this request seriously and pass this funding before there is no money from any source to take care of even the basic needs that these unaccompanied kids in our country need to have taken care of.

Over the weekend and 2 weeks before, the New York Times—which is no advocate, by the way, for the Trump administration—basically said: Give the administration the money. This is a legitimate crisis, and it needs to be treated like that.

In their last editorial, they said: “Unequipped to deal with the crush, border facilities and migrant shelters are dangerously overcrowded, and the staff is overburdened.” They went on to say: “Dysfunction, disease, and even death are a growing reality.” The Washington Post said the same thing.

Let’s deal with this immediate humanitarian crisis. Let’s deal with it like the people whom we work for expect us to deal with this. Let’s get this humanitarian crisis taken care of before we see a human catastrophe occur. I hope we can do it, and I hope we can do it quickly.

With that, I yield the floor.

#### NOMINATION OF RODNEY SMITH

Mr. SCOTT of Florida. Madam President, Judge Rodney Smith has an impressive record of honorably serving the State of Florida, and I am proud to support his confirmation as a district judge for the Southern District of Florida. After receiving a bachelor’s degree from Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University and a law degree from Michigan State University, Judge Smith worked as a personal injury attorney. He then pursued a career in public service as a senior assistant city attorney for the city of Miami Beach, before his appointment to the Miami-Dade County Court in 2008. In my role as Governor of Florida, I had the honor of appointing Judge Smith to the Eleventh Judicial Circuit Court in 2012. Judge Smith will continue to serve our State and Nation well on the Federal bench.

#### NOMINATION OF THOMAS P. BARBER

Madam President, I am honored to support Judge Thomas Barber to serve as a district judge in the Middle District of Florida. Judge Barber graduated from the University of Florida in 1985 and received a law degree from the University of Pennsylvania Law School in 1992. Since then, Judge Barber has served as an Assistant State Attorney, an assistant Statewide prosecutor, and a circuit judge for the Thirteenth Judicial Circuit of Florida. Our citizens deserves judges like Judge Barber that are committed to enforcing our law, not legislating from the bench. With his long and distinguished history of public service, I have no doubt Judge Barber will serve Americans honorably as a Federal judge.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri.

Mr. BLUNT. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the votes following the first vote in this series be 10 minutes in length.

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

Under the previous order, all postcloture time is expired.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Barker nomination?

Mr. BLUNT. Madam President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There is a sufficient second.

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) and the Senator from Montana (Mr. DAINES).

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) and the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) are necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PERDUE). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 91, nays 5, as follows:

#### [Rollcall Vote No. 155 Ex.]

##### YEAS—91

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

##### NAYS—5

Gillibrand	Klobuchar	Warren
Harris	Markey	

##### NOT VOTING—4

Alexander	Daines
Booker	Sanders

The nomination was confirmed.

#### EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the next nomination.

The bill clerk read the nomination of Corey Landon Maze, of Alabama, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of Alabama.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Maze nomination?

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER) and the Senator from Montana (Mr. DAINES).

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) and the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) are necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote or to change their vote?

The result was announced—yeas 62, nays 34, as follows:

#### [Rollcall Vote No. 156 Ex.]

##### YEAS—62

Barrasso	Gardner	Perdue
Blackburn	Graham	Portman
Blunt	Grassley	Risch
Boozman	Hassan	Roberts
Braun	Hawley	Romney
Brown	Hoeven	Rosen
Burr	Hyde-Smith	Rounds
Capito	Inhofe	Rubio
Cardin	Isakson	Sasse
Carper	Johnson	Schatz
Cassidy	Jones	Scott (FL)
Collins	Kennedy	Scott (SC)
Cornyn	Lankford	Shelby
Cortez Masto	Leahy	Sinema
Cotton	Lee	Sullivan
Cramer	Manchin	Thune
Crapo	McConnell	Tillis
Cruz	McSally	Toomey
Enzi	Moran	Wicker
Ernst	Murkowski	Young
Fischer	Paul	

##### NAYS—34

Baldwin	Hirono	Shaheen
Bennet	Kaine	Smith
Blumenthal	King	Stabenow
Cantwell	Klobuchar	Tester
Casey	Markey	Udall
Coons	Menendez	Van Hollen
Duckworth	Merkley	Warner
Durbin	Murphy	Warren
Feinstein	Murray	Whitehouse
Gillibrand	Peters	Wyden
Harris	Reed	
Heinrich	Schumer	

##### NOT VOTING—4

Alexander	Daines
Booker	Sanders

The nomination was confirmed.

#### EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the next nomination.

The senior assistant bill clerk read the nomination of Rodney Smith, of Florida, to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of Florida.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I am requesting that these 10-minute votes be true 10-minute votes—in fact, less than 10-minute votes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Smith nomination?

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?