

Clearly, we want to make sure there is enforcement, and I know that is being worked through, to put belt and suspenders.

At the end of the day, every day we wait means more jobs we are missing out on creating for our economy. I know that there is still the opportunity to get this done, maybe in the next few weeks.

We have a whip team that has been put in place specifically for USMCA. I know there are a lot of Democrats that have been working with Ambassador Lighthizer as well, to try to get this done.

I would ask the gentleman if he has any idea of where that process is on his side, if there is any idea of a timeline to finally bring this to the floor, pass this important agreement that would send a message not only to our friends from the north and south, Canada and Mexico, but to our friends all around the world, to Japan and other countries that want to get trade agreements with America but this is holding back because they want to see if this can get done.

Then, ultimately, let's shift our focus to China and all the countries around the world that want China to have to comply with the rules that everybody else has to comply with, to finally get these tariff fights over so we can have an even stronger economy.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Maryland.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, we have said all along that we want to get to yes on the USMCA. Frankly, we think it is an improvement over NAFTA, which needs improving.

As the gentleman may know, the Speaker and I were here when we voted on NAFTA. We both voted for it.

There were some promises made and side agreements that the rights of workers and the environment would be protected. Unfortunately, that did not turn out to be true, so that, in adopting a change to NAFTA, we want to make sure that the promises made in the agreement are promises that can be enforced.

As the U.S. Chamber of Commerce has often said, the commitments in a trade pact aren't worth the paper they are written on if they can't be enforced.

Mr. Speaker, that has been the posture of the Speaker, myself, and of so many others, that enforcement is critical. Unfortunately, the NAFTA enforcement mechanisms have been a failure.

In 25 years, as I am sure the whip knows, the U.S. has taken only one successful enforcement action under the NAFTA dispute resolution procedure, and none in the past 20 years. Not a single enforcement has prevailed. We have been completely unable to enforce its labor provisions, not one successful enforcement action.

We want to get to yes. And, yes, I want to say that Ambassador Lighthizer is somebody who we respect

and think is operating in good faith. We think he is a positive interlocutor. He is somebody who we can work with and have been working with.

On the other hand, we sent a letter 6 weeks ago, and as the gentleman pointed out, we got an answer yesterday. So, it is taking some time for our task force to get answers to questions and to determine how we can move forward to ensure that the matters included in the agreement become reality, not simply words on paper.

That is important for workers. It is important for our environment. Very frankly, it is also important in terms of trying to contain drug prices, here and around the world.

The gentleman talked about prescription drugs. That is one of the items that is still in dispute. We want to get to yes. We think this is an improvement on what exists.

Therefore, I am hopeful that we will be able to get to an agreement. We believe it will require that the agreement be opened and that enforcement be included so that, as the chamber said, it can really be enforced.

If that happens, I am hopeful that we can pass that agreement, with the agreement of our friends in labor, with our friends at the Chamber of Commerce, and in a bipartisan way on this floor. Let's hope that happens.

But we have made it very, very clear that, if it is just words on paper and not enforceable, it is not a good agreement for America or America's workers.

But I hope that we can move forward and achieve an agreement on this issue so that we can pass it.

□ 1300

Mr. SCALISE. Mr. Speaker, I share the gentleman from Maryland's optimism about the ability to get there, to get this done, to get to "yes." And with the provisions that are already in place on enforcement, if there is a way to make them stronger, I know that that is something that Ambassador Lighthizer has been working with the gentleman's team on.

That is why, while the letter was sent 6 weeks ago, Ambassador Lighthizer started going to work right away, sitting down with folks on both sides, including Democratic leadership in the House, to address those as best as both sides could get agreement; and that is where the letter, I think, finally lays out the remedies to those issues that were brought up.

It is my hope that, as that is reviewed, we get to a place where we can find agreement and then get it passed. Mexico has already passed it. Canada is waiting on us. And I think we would send a strong signal to the world that, not only is America the best place to do business, with the strongest economy in the world, but we are also able to reach better trade deals, both for Americans and for our friends. Then there are a lot more folks in line waiting for us to be a part of those kind of deals, too.

So I look forward to the ability to keep working on that. I would love the ability to work with the gentleman as the Republican whip, the leader, laying out a floor schedule for when that comes, and we can celebrate something big for this country and the workers of America.

I thank the gentleman for his work and for this discourse, and I yield back the balance of my time.

HOUR OF MEETING ON TOMORROW, AND ADJOURNMENT FROM FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2019, TO TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 2019

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 9 a.m. tomorrow, and further, when the House adjourns on that day, it adjourn to meet on Tuesday, September 17, 2019, when it shall convene at noon for morning-hour debate and 2 p.m. for legislative business.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PHILLIPS). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Maryland?

There was no objection.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Byrd, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed a bill of the following title in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 178. An act to condemn gross human rights violations of ethnic Turkic Muslims in Xinjiang, and calling for an end to arbitrary detention, torture, and harassment of these communities inside and outside China.

The message also announced that the Secretary of the Senate be directed to request the House to return to the Senate the bill (S. 1790) "An Act to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2020 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes."

PERMISSION TO EXTEND REMARKS

Ms. LEE of California. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to extend my remarks in the RECORD and to include therein extraneous material notwithstanding the fact that it exceeds two pages and is estimated by the Director of the Government Publishing Office to cost \$2,433.98.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

CONGRATULATING ELKS LODGE 2839

(Mr. VAN DREW asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)