

next Secretary of Labor—another group of talented professionals put to work for the American people and more of the President's team in place.

APPROPRIATIONS

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, this week, we will also address our responsibility to keep the Federal Government funded.

The Republicans regret that our Democratic colleagues have chosen to back away from the agreement we all reached just last month to ensure a smooth, bipartisan funding process. We regret that the Democrats chose to block funding for the national defense, including a pay raise for our men and women in uniform, in order to pick a partisan fight with the White House.

Yet, for the sake of the country, our near-term priority is that of passing a continuing resolution so the government can stay open while work continues. I am glad the continuing resolution on the table earned significant bipartisan support across the Capitol and has also earned the green light from the White House. The Senate will vote on it this week. As Chairman SHELBY and Senator LEAHY continue their work on regular order appropriations, I hope the cooperation that has surrounded this CR can carry over and that we can get the appropriations process back on track.

THE UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, on yet another matter, the productive, bipartisan work that needs to happen in the Senate will stand in stark contrast to the choices made by the House Democrats across the Capitol.

Over there, it seems as though a far-left socialist ideology is increasingly becoming mainstream Democratic Party doctrine, and rather than roll up their sleeves and work with the Republicans and with the White House on proposals that could actually become law, the House continues to promote one dangerous leftwing policy after another.

The Senate has already voted on the Green New Deal, the Democrats' socialist wish list that seeks to outlaw affordable energy and transportation, eliminate the jobs many Americans rely on, and even empower government bureaucrats to redesign families' homes. Needless to say, it didn't do too well. Here in the real world, out of the college campus atmosphere that seems to characterize the House Democrats, the Senate voted it down. I have already discussed the recent House-passed bill that would have cut down on our domestic energy and American energy independence.

We also all know about Medicare for None, which is the plan the Democrats' Presidential candidates are rushing to embrace, that would literally outlaw the existing health insurance 180 mil-

lion Americans currently get on the job and throw everyone into an untested, one-size-fits-all government plan.

Just last week, Speaker PELOSI expanded on the Democrats' Medicare for None philosophy by introducing a bill to micromanage Americans' medicine and start trying to have Washington, DC, run the prescription drug industry because, if there is anything that has been proven to increase competition and affordability for American families, it is huge, new doses of heavy-handed Washington, DC, interference.

No, we will not let the Democrats take us down the path that embraces the socialist concept of starting to nationalize an industry with people devoted to finding cures and saving lives. The life sciences sector is driving the search for cures to Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, multiple sclerosis, and countless other diseases that impact millions of Americans.

The Speaker and her caucus may be content to spend their majority passing leftwing messaging bills, but in this Senate, we take the American people's priorities more seriously, and we will stick to getting their business done.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Joseph Cella, of Michigan, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Fiji, and to serve concurrently and without additional compensation as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Kiribati, the Republic of Nauru, the Kingdom of Tonga, and Tuvalu.

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

UNITED STATES-MEXICO-CANADA TRADE AGREEMENT

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, in just a few days, we will mark the 1-year anniversary of the President's concluding negotiations on the United States-Mexico-Canada Free Trade Agreement. It is time for Congress to ratify this agreement now.

The United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement will benefit pretty much every sector of the U.S. economy: the automobile industry, textiles, digital trade and e-commerce, services, manufacturing, and yes, of course, agriculture.

As the representative of a State whose lifeblood is agriculture, farmers and ranchers are always at the top of my mind, and a huge focus of mine right now is helping our struggling agricultural economy.

Low commodity and livestock prices, natural disasters, and protracted trade disputes have made a tough few years for our Nation's farmers. One of the most important things we can do to help our agricultural economy recover is to open new markets for American agricultural products.

During August, I spent a lot of time talking to farmers back home in my State of South Dakota. Again and again, they emphasized that they need action on trade from Washington. With so many trade deals currently up in the air, farmers and ranchers are struggling with a lack of certainty about what international markets are going to look like.

While they share the President's goal of addressing trade imbalances and securing more favorable conditions for American products, they also believe that we need to conclude the agreements that we are negotiating as soon as possible. The longer negotiations drag on, the tougher their situation gets. That is why I have repeatedly stressed the need to bring these agreements to a swift conclusion, and I emphasize that point to the President nearly every time I talk to him.

However, there is one deal we don't need to wait for, and that is the United States-Mexico-Canada Free Trade Agreement. As I said earlier, negotiations on this agreement concluded a year ago, and it is high time for Congress to take it up and pass it so that farmers and ranchers can start seeing the benefits.

The United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement is a big win for farmers and ranchers. Of particular interest to South Dakota are the agreement's dairy provisions. Dairy is an important and rapidly growing industry in South Dakota. Drive the I-29 corridor north of Brookings, SD, and you can see firsthand the massive dairy expansion that we have experienced over the past several years.

The United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement will preserve U.S. dairy farmers' role as a key dairy supplier to Mexico, and it will substantially expand market access in Canada, where