

this simple bipartisan tax treaty will make for this American manufacturer. I was happy to hear the CEO announce that the company can now move forward with a major \$30 million capital investment in developing its facility and its workforce as a direct result of the ratification of that treaty.

It was just another reminder that the economic policies we vote on here, often on a bipartisan basis, make an enormous difference for workers and job creators in each of our States.

While we applauded the Spain tax treaty and the new prosperity it will unlock, it was impossible to overlook the fact that USMCA is still being blocked over in the House of Representatives. By one analysis, 12 million American jobs are dependent upon trade with Mexico and Canada. Together they make up a \$500 billion market for U.S. exports. It is no surprise that updating our trading relationships with both of our North American neighbors would stand to have a major positive effect on our economy.

To be more specific, according to data from the International Trade Commission, the USMCA would generate about 176,000 new American jobs. It would pump nearly \$70 billion into the U.S. economy, and the already massive markets for U.S. products would be expected to grow by tens of billions more.

For months, Speaker PELOSI and House Democrats have been claiming they notionally support this agreement and want to get to yes, but month after month, this happy talk has seemingly led to no tangible progress, just more heel-dragging. Hard-working Kentuckians, people like our farmers and our cattlemen, keep writing to me and asking Congress to pass the USMCA, but Speaker PELOSI will not make time for it.

House Democrats have enough time to continue their 3-year-old obsession with impeaching the President, but they cannot find the time to pass a landmark trade deal that will create 176,000 new American jobs. Just saying their priorities out loud indicates how backward they are.

HONG KONG

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, now, on a totally different matter, Hong Kong has been rocked by more violence as citizens continue resisting the Chinese Communist Party's encroachment on their autonomy and freedoms.

On Monday, it appears the local police shot a 21-year-old protester at nearly point-blank range. The police have arrested hundreds of demonstrators, reportedly as young as 12 and as old as 82. Tear gas, rubber bullets, and other violent measures have now become standard fare.

A few days earlier, a number of democracy-supporting Hong Kong legislators were swept up in a government crackdown. These elected officials were

either arrested or given summons just a few weeks before local elections.

These continuing government escalations are inconsistent with the Hong Kong Basic Law, with international agreements, and with the will of Hongkongers. Brutalizing their own people will not circumvent the core issue here: Beijing's insatiable thirst for control.

I have advocated for Hong Kong since I wrote our Nation's Hong Kong Policy Act back in 1992. I know many of us in this body now want to extend and expand that law in a targeted manner that focuses pressure on the Chinese Communist Party and its agents who are responsible for undermining Hong Kong's autonomy while minimizing the collateral economic damage to the very Hongkongers we want to help.

I am eager to continue working with colleagues, such as Senator RISCH, Senator GRAHAM, Senator RUBIO, and others, toward a strong and procedurally workable solution. Meanwhile, I appreciate statements by administration leaders such as Vice President PENCE and Secretary Pompeo that show a clear-eyed perspective on China's Orwellian tactics and bad intentions.

I urge the administration to use the significant leverage and authorities it already has, particularly under the Global Magnitsky Act, to hold individuals accountable.

Hong Kong is not the only recent reminder that we live in a dangerous world in which America's interests, allies, and ideals are constantly threatened. Press reports this morning indicated that Israel is suffering yet another round of terror, including more than 160 rocket launches fired against civilian targets in Israel. This comes after Israeli forces appear to have eliminated one high-ranking leader in the terrorist group Palestinian Islamic Jihad, in Gaza, and targeted another PIJ terrorist in Damascus, Syria.

The United States stands with our ally Israel against PIJ, Hamas, and Hezbollah terrorists who have long sought to erase the Jewish State. If these reports are accurate, it will be no surprise that one of these terrorist leaders was holed up in Damascus.

Syria, under Assad, stands alongside Iran as the chief patron of anti-Israel terrorism. This is just another reminder that the United States and some of our closest allies have a strong say in the future of Syria and that a victory for Assad will be a victory for Iran and for terrorism.

So every hour seemingly brings more evidence of our troubled world, but, just as with the trade agreements, critical legislation in this area is currently frozen in place. It is another casualty of Democrats' apparent inability to make headway on anything besides fighting with the White House.

For the second time in 2 months, Senate Democrats recently voted once again to filibuster the annual funding for our Armed Forces—for our men and women in uniform—and while Senate

Democrats block appropriations for defense, House Democrats are now slow-walking the authorizing legislation—the NDAA. Since the first NDAA was passed way back in 1961, Congress has never failed to pass a bipartisan NDAA by the end of the year—not once. Yet with House Democrats fixated on impeachment, I understand that Chairman ADAM SMITH and his fellow Democrats are now dragging their heels on the conference committee that is needed to complete this bill. These House Democrats passed a uniquely partisan NDAA earlier this year, unlike the Senate's bipartisan version, and now they are slow-walking the conference committee.

These are among our most basic governing responsibilities: passing an NDAA and funding our Armed Forces. The United States of America cannot operate at less than full strength on the world stage because Democrats are too busy—too busy—impeaching the Commander in Chief.

NOMINATIONS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, on one final matter, while our Democratic colleagues continue to block the Senate from moving forward with defense funding here on the floor, we will use this time to confirm more of the President's well-qualified nominees to the executive branch and to the Federal bench.

Later this week we will consider the nomination of Steven J. Menashi to be U.S. circuit judge for the Second Circuit. Mr. Menashi is a graduate of Dartmouth College and Stanford University Law School. He has accrued an impressive record in private practice and earned clerkships on the D.C. Circuit and the Supreme Court with Justice Alito.

First, we will consider the nomination of Chad Wolf to serve in a senior leadership position post at the Department of Homeland Security. Mr. Wolf's experience at the Department dates back to the immediate aftermath of the September 11th terrorist attacks. He has had a hand in arranging our Nation's critical homeland security infrastructure. The current Acting Secretary of DHS has called him a "proven, thoughtful, and principled executive," and a former Assistant Secretary at the Department said, "Chad knows the issues cold."

I hope my colleagues will join me in advancing each of these nominations later this week.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.