

shaking hands with voters, they will be sitting here like the rest of us. That will be a big blow to their election. Based on what we have seen in the press, these four Senators aren't what I would call "happy campers," and I don't blame them.

You had better believe, though, that their competitors are celebrating. They are going to have the Iowa caucuses, perhaps, and maybe New Hampshire and Nevada all to themselves while these four Senators who are running for President in the Democratic primary will have to be here like the rest of us.

So, in holding the articles for 4 weeks, the Speaker just cleared out some of the top contenders in the Presidential primaries—the early ones—and it is pretty clear that the candidate who stands the most to gain from their absence is former Vice President Biden.

The politics of this impeachment circus show that it was never a serious one. A constitutional issue? Wrong. It was a political exercise from the start, meant to hurt this President and help the Speaker's party elect a Democrat in his stead in November—or at least NANCY PELOSI's friends in the Democratic Party.

Over these last 4 weeks, we have been standing by, waiting to do our duty, wasting valuable time, while the Democrats in the House try to come to terms with their embarrassing and inadequate investigation, and watching them as they try to figure out how they could possibly get themselves out of this embarrassing box canyon they have walked into.

I know we are all eager for the process to finally shift from the House's hands to the Senate, and I am hopeful that later this evening we will finally be free from Speaker PELOSI's manipulative games when it comes to impeachment.

UNITED STATES-MEXICO-CANADA TRADE AGREEMENT

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, finally there is some good news here in Washington that we will actually get some important things done, and, particularly, I am talking about the USMCA, or the United States-Mexico-Canada Trade Agreement. I am hopeful that we can get that voted out of the Senate by tomorrow and get it onto the President's desk. This is a top priority for my constituents, who are farmers, ranchers, and manufacturers, as well as consumers, whose daily lives are impacted by trade with our neighbors to the north and south. We will soon be able to mark it as yet another win for Texas under this administration.

For more than a quarter of a century, NAFTA, or the North American Free Trade Agreement, the predecessor to the USMCA, has been the guiding force in our trading relationships with Mexico and Canada. By virtually any measure, it has been a great success. The

U.S. Chamber of Commerce estimates that 13 million American jobs have been created and are dependent on trade with Mexico and Canada. That is a big deal.

A lot has changed over the last 25 years. In fact, then, the internet was in its infancy, smartphones didn't exist, and the only shopping you did was at a brick-and-mortar store. The way business is conducted today has evolved significantly. It is time we bring our trade agreements up to date.

That is where the USMCA comes in. It preserves the basic hallmark provisions of NAFTA, like duty-free access to Mexican and Canadian markets, and it adds measures to modernize the agreement. Additionally, the USMCA includes strong protections for intellectual property, which is critical to protecting the incredible innovation that Americans create right here at home. It also cuts the redtape that has been preventing countless small businesses from tapping into foreign markets.

It also accounts for e-commerce and digital products at a time when governments around the world are proposing all kinds of new taxes on e-commerce. It is actually the first free-trade agreement with a digital trade chapter. That is why a lot of folks call the USMCA "NAFTA-2.0." It is better, it is stronger, and it is up to date.

I have no doubt that this agreement will be a boon to both our national and Texas economies, but I do have some concerns about the path it has taken to ratification. This product was essentially negotiated with the House and given to the Senate as a fait accompli, and I worry that that can set a dangerous precedent for future trade agreements. I hope that is not something we will allow to become a habit, but it doesn't diminish the fact that this trade agreement will bring serious benefits to my constituents and my State and continue to strengthen our national economy.

I appreciate the President's commitment to strengthening our trading agreements with our neighbors and bolstering a stronger North America. The USMCA is a big win for all three countries involved, and it is a big win for the State of Texas.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

IRAN

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, last week we were very close to an act of war between the United States and Iran. I must tell you, we have been talking about this potential threat for a long time. I am a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. We have held numerous meetings in our discussion about the fact that there is no authorization for the use of military force by the United States against Iran that has been approved by Congress. I remember, during hearings, listening

to administrative witnesses who said: Well, there is no intent to use force against Iran.

Well, Congress did not act. Even though, I must tell you, several of our colleagues, including this Senator, had urged us to take up an authorization for the use of military force in regards to the problems in the Middle East, there was no action taken. I want to applaud Senator KAINE, who has been working on this for several years, and our former colleague Senator Flake, who did everything they could to bring a bipartisan discussion and action in regards to exercising congressional responsibility on the use of force by our military.

Well, we now know that this is a real threat, that we may be going to war without Congress's involvement, which is contrary not only to our Constitution but to the laws passed by the U.S. Congress. So I want to thank Senator KAINE and Senator LEE for filing S.J. Res. 68, a bipartisan resolution. I hope it will receive the expedited process that is envisioned in the War Powers Resolution, and I hope that we will have a chance to act on this in the next few days. It is our responsibility—Congress's responsibility—to commit our troops to combat, and it rests squarely with the legislative branch of government.

Let me first cite the Constitution of the United States. You hear a lot of discussion about the Constitution here on the floor of the U.S. Senate. Article I, section 8, of the Constitution says that Congress has the power to declare war.

Now, that was challenged in the 1970s, after Congress had passed the Gulf of Tonkin resolution in regards to our presence in Vietnam.

It was passed in an innocent way to protect American troops and ships that were in that region, but as we know, that resolution was used as justification by President Johnson and others to expand our involvement in Vietnam and, ultimately, led to a very active and costly war for the United States—and lengthy war, I might add.

In 1973, Congress passed the War Powers Act. It wasn't easy. President Nixon vetoed it. We overrode the veto in a bipartisan vote in the U.S. Congress. We did that because of the abuse of power during the Vietnam war.

Let me read what the War Powers Act provides because it is very telling in regard to what we saw last week in regard to Iran, a little over a week ago now. It requires consultation with Congress by the President "in every possible instance before committing troops to war." No. 1, it requires the President to consult with us before he commits any of our troops to an engagement. No. 2, the President is required to report within 48 hours "into hostilities or into situations where imminent involvement in hostilities is clearly indicated by the circumstances." So it provides for the imminent involvement or threat to the United States.