

create more transparency and accountability in the process. I am very glad Congress will be taking this important step. I want to thank Chairman BLUNT and Ranking Member KLOBUCHAR and their counterparts in the House for working hard to get this across the finish line.

That wasn't the only milestone we cleared yesterday. Yesterday afternoon, the House of Representatives joined the Senate in passing the farm bill conference report. Now it is on its way to the President's desk.

The boost this bill delivers couldn't come soon enough. It is no secret that these are tough times in farm country. Falling prices and volatile markets make it harder to make ends meet. Net farm income continues to decline. The threat of natural disasters is a constant fear for even the most skilled and prepared farmers.

Families in my home State of Kentucky are all too familiar with these challenges. Months of heavy rain and severe weather this year have damaged crop yields and increased the burden on producers. We are home to more than 75,000 farms. They produce everything from soybeans and poultry to horses and corn. These families are looking to us for help and stability, and when President Trump signs our farm bill into law, more stability is just what they will get.

I would like to share some of the bill's highlights that will support farm families in the Blue Grass State, by way of example.

In need of certainty and predictability, this farm bill extends a strong commodity safety net and protects crop insurance.

It contains policies to encourage future generations of farmers to plant their own roots—particularly important in States like mine with aging agricultural populations.

To preserve our land for the future, the legislation promotes conservation programs, outdoor recreation, and upgraded watershed and drinking water infrastructure.

For our rural communities, it expands broadband deployment and dedicates further resources to combat the opioid epidemic.

For hundreds of thousands of Kentuckians faced with food insecurity, the farm bill increases funding for emergency programs at food banks.

The legislation provides continued funding for groundbreaking agricultural research at universities and research institutions.

For producers looking for markets abroad, it strengthens our trade programs to develop new opportunities for Kentucky around the globe.

Of course, each of these important victories for Kentucky farmers comes in addition to the new opportunities available with the full legalization of industrial hemp, as I have discussed extensively here on the floor.

All in all, this legislation is a big win for farmers in Kentucky and across our

country. I am proud to have played a part in delivering that victory.

It has been my privilege to represent Kentucky farmers on the Agriculture Committee every day I have served in the Senate. The multiyear bill we produced is a credit to the leadership of Chairman ROBERTS and Ranking Member STABENOW, and now the fruits of their labor are finally on the way to the White House.

I would like to express my gratitude to my fellow conferees, especially my colleague from Kentucky, Congressman JAMIE COMER.

I would also like to thank the Kentucky Farm Bureau, which has been my partner every step of the way. Earlier this month, the farm bureau announced the beginning of its centennial year. I would be hard-pressed to think of a better way to celebrate that 100th birthday than with a new farm bill.

There is a reason this bill passed both Houses with overwhelming bipartisan majorities. There is a reason this has been a big priority for Congress and the administration. Farming families deserve more stability. Once the President signs this farm bill into law, that is precisely what they will have.

TRIBUTE TO JEFF FLAKE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I would like to close by paying tribute to another Member of this body whose retirement in the Senate is fast approaching. This particular Senator, in his own words, grew up on a dry, dusty ranch in Northern Arizona. You might be surprised at that description if you knew only the name of his hometown—"Snowflake." But this Navajo County town of a couple of thousand residents wasn't named for its meteorology; it was named for its founding families. It was set up back in 1878 by two wagon train pioneers: Mr. Snow and—that is right—Mr. FLAKE. It would still be 34 years until Arizona became the 48th State, and 134 years later, that Mormon pioneer's great-great-grandson would be elected to the U.S. Senate.

JEFF FLAKE is the son of cattle ranchers, so he learned all about "earmarking" from an early age. Back when JEFF was serving in the House, he explained in an op-ed that back on the ranch, earmarking was an unsavory way to brand your cattle. Apparently, the practice involves a pocketknife.

Well, JEFF moved on from that cattle pen. He wound up leading a statewide think tank. Then he won election to the House. By the time he arrived here in Washington—filled with equal parts fiery resolve and smalltown collegiality—"earmarks" had come to mean something very different to him, but, as his House colleagues would soon find out, he found the new meaning just as unappealing.

JEFF's take on fiscal responsibility and good government ruffled some feathers over in the House, but his star kept rising. He didn't seem to mind that lonely feeling that we have all

known here in Washington from time to time—the occasional sense that you have wound up on a bit of an island. I mean, JEFF really didn't mind this feeling. This is not a political metaphor, by the way; it is literally one of the man's hobbies.

Starting back in 2009, and several times since, our colleague had decided a "dream vacation" means a rugged survival trip where he is marooned on a remote island with just a couple tools. In one eloquent reflection, JEFF described this predilection as "a long bout of 'Caruso envy.'"

That first time, he traveled alone. To pass the time, there was the standard activities—dodging sharks; spearfishing for breakfast, lunch, and dinner; starting fires with coconut husks and a magnifying glass; befriending the hermit crabs—you know, typical tourist fare.

In fairness to our friend, maybe a solo getaway has a special appeal to anyone who grew up as one of 11 children or, for that matter, I can see why it might tempt a Member of the House, but apparently the appeal was somewhat broader than the alone time because on subsequent trips JEFF actually brought company.

A few years ago, he talked our colleague MARTIN HEINRICH into coming along on one of these adventures. It was just the two of them—and some TV cameras. This was prime time stuff now. The network called the show "Rival Survival."

That title actually reminds me of something JEFF said to his former colleagues in the House in his farewell speech, while he was preparing to come over here. He said coming to the Senate was like entering "enemy territory." That is a funny phrase, "enemy territory." It is funny because vitriol and hostility are so precisely not how Senator FLAKE will be remembered.

Instead, there have been warm and genuine friendships with colleagues on both sides of the aisle and shared work on policy accomplishments that have already made a difference for millions of Americans.

JEFF has cast votes for landmark accomplishments that have tangibly made life better for middle-class families in his home State and across the Nation. We don't have enough time here to name them all.

As part of this majority on behalf of the people of Arizona, Senator FLAKE gave his vote to start historic tax cuts and tax reform for the American people and to enact major regulatory reforms and to pass bipartisan achievements on every subject from the opioid crisis to caring for our veterans.

So JEFF has achieved much in this high office. He has had a hand in numerous consequential policy victories. A few years back, he was named by The Hill newspaper as the No. 1 most beautiful person on Capitol Hill. Talk about an achievement that few of us can even aspire to.

Seriously, I think we all know that nothing JEFF has done in these hallways will rank as his proudest accomplishment. That has to be persuading Cheryl to marry him and the beautiful family they have built together, five kids—Alexis, Austin, Tanner, Ryan, and Dallin—and now grandchildren.

Almost a decade ago, after his first island adventure, JEFF wrote: “I will never see a sunset as peaceful as [the ones] I saw there.”

Well, I am not so sure. I suspect that when JEFF is back home with his lovely family by his side—well, with company like that, I expect the Arizona sunsets will give those Pacific nights a run for their money after all.

So we bid farewell to our colleague. We thank him for his service, and we wish him and his family much happiness in the next chapters they will be writing together.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Democratic leader is recognized.

GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, we have just a little over a week to come to some agreement on how to fund the government past next Friday.

Leader PELOSI and I have given the President two options to keep the government open. Both are noncontroversial. Neither contain any Democratic demand. We just want to keep the government open. So far, President Trump has not accepted either offer. The President appears to be clinging to his demand for billions of dollars for a border wall, and from what we saw in the Oval Office and news reports about his reaction after our meeting, President Trump is willing to throw a temper tantrum and shut down the government unless he gets his way.

I want to be crystal clear. There will be no additional appropriations to pay for the border wall. It is done. The President repeatedly promised that Mexico would pay for his unnecessary and ineffective border wall, in his words, “100 percent.” On Tuesday, he said he would be “proud” to shut down the government unless U.S. taxpayers pay for it. Now, just this morning, the President tweeted that Mexico will pay for the wall through savings from the new NAFTA.

Well, Mr. President, if you say Mexico is going to pay for the wall through

NAFTA—which it certainly will not—then I guess we don’t have to. Let’s fund the government.

Honestly, if the President really believed what he tweeted this morning, that his new NAFTA would pay for the wall, he wouldn’t be threatening to shut down the government unless American taxpayers fund his wall. He can’t have it both ways. The President’s position on the wall is totally contradictory, ill-informed, and frankly irresponsible. It is not a serious proposal. It is a throwaway idea the President used—used in the campaign and still uses—to fire up his base.

A Trump temper tantrum and shutdown threat isn’t going to change any minds in Congress. President Trump has several ways to avoid a shutdown. He should pick one and soon, but if we wind up with a shutdown, it will be entirely the President’s fault. President Trump himself would not dispute that in the Oval Office on Tuesday. He almost bragged that he would shut down the government—what irresponsibility.

I would just like to remind my friend the majority leader that if we arrive at a Trump shutdown, the onus for reopening the government will soon fall in his lap. When Democrats take control of the House in January, Democrats will pass one of our two options to fund the government, and then Leader MCCONNELL and Senate Republicans will be left holding the bag for a Trump shutdown if they don’t pass our bill now.

So there is no way for my Republican friends to avoid the issue. There is no way for Leader MCCONNELL to avoid the issue, fearful of President Trump as they all might be. Either Republicans help deal with the President now or they will be left dealing with a much bigger problem in January.

CHINA

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, a brief word on China. I have spent the better part of the last two decades encouraging administrations to be tougher on China, which has risen to challenge the United States economically, not through fair trade and fair competition but by shielding its market from U.S. competition, flouting international trade rules against dumping currency manipulation, relentlessly stealing our intellectual property and know-how. China has not played by the rules. They are the outlaw of trade, and they have cost the United States millions of jobs and probably trillions, if not hundreds of billions, of dollars.

The recent arrest of the CFO of Huawei, a tech giant in China with close ties to its government and military, is a reminder of the predatory and rapacious behavior of Chinese companies. Huawei is charged by U.S. officials with intentionally violating U.S. sanctions with Iran.

Beyond these specific charges, however, Huawei has raised serious concerns among U.S. officials for a poten-

tial role in cyber espionage, given their reported links to China’s state security services, and now news reports have confirmed that the massive cyber attack on the Marriott hotel chain a few weeks ago was conducted by none other than Chinese intelligence.

This administration has been tougher on China than previous administrations. They deserve credit for that, but this administration has also shown an eagerness to quickly bargain away tough enforcement of Chinese abuses for mild and sometimes meaningless concessions so President Trump can get a quick news hit, particularly on a bad day. That is what happened with ZTE. No one wants to see a repeat of that movie.

We had ZTE dead to rights. They were hurting America, and President Trump, at the last minute—still unexplained—let them off the hook. I hope that doesn’t happen again because this administration has set us up for a potential victory for the first time—better than Bush’s administration, better than Obama’s administration—against China rapaciousness.

I am urging the President to be tough on Huawei and direct U.S. officials to prosecute these charges and have the Huawei CFO stand on trial in the United States, as she deserves.

TRIBUTE TO HEIDI HEITKAMP

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, finally, to my dear friend and about my dear friend, the Senator from North Dakota. The task sadly falls to me to begin saying goodbye to Members of our caucus who will not be returning in the 116th Congress. This morning, I would like to begin with the junior Senator from North Dakota.

HEIDI HEITKAMP had a childhood that sounds like it was ripped from the pages of a frontier epic. She grew up as one of seven kids born over 9 years in a house with three bedrooms, in a town with a population south of 100. Do the math. That means that around one-tenth of the town was Heitkamps.

Inside the household, the lack of space meant that HEIDI’s room was also her brother’s room and also the laundry room. According to her sisters, the presence of a laundry machine had almost no effect on her. She read and read, and rarely, if ever, did she participate in the washing or folding of the Heitkamp laundry.

Her siblings didn’t seem to mind, at least not too much. As Julie Heitkamp said about growing up with HEIDI, “She was so good . . . it was annoying.”

It turned out that the bookworm from a small town in North Dakota was destined for great things. When she worked for Senator Kent Conrad, the outstanding Democrat from North Dakota, he realized the same goodness in HEIDI her sisters recognized, and he encouraged her to run for State auditor at the age of 28. She didn’t win that race, but she ran again for State tax commissioner and won and, again, for