

the funding our commanders need. We need to get our funding process back on track for the entire Federal Government.

House Democrats need to stop slow-walking the USMCA, the landmark trade agreement that stands to create 176,000 new American jobs. Mexico is ready, Canada is ready, and a majority in the Senate is ready. The entire continent is just waiting on Speaker PELOSI to stop blocking this win for the United States and to stop blocking these new jobs. I don't care how much my Democratic colleagues in the House may dislike the President. They shouldn't throw 176,000 new American jobs on the scrap heap.

On all these fronts, I hope sincerely that our Democratic colleagues will be able to separate this vital business from their animus toward the administration and join Republicans in moving forward with the work of the American people.

TURKEY AND SYRIA

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, on one final matter, I know I speak for many of our colleagues on both sides of the aisle in expressing my grave concern at the events that have unfolded in Syria in recent days.

Turkey is our NATO ally. Yes, it hosts millions of Syrian refugees and has a legitimate security concern about the situation in Syria. But Turkey's escalation of hostilities with the Syrian Kurdish partners who have helped the United States fight terrorism is completely and totally unacceptable. This violence needs to end.

Syrian Kurdish forces have stood proudly alongside U.S. forces in the fight against ISIS. Over years of joint effort, their shared sacrifices have put ISIS on its heels and rendered its physical caliphate essentially nonexistent. But leaving the field now would mean leaving the door wide open for a resurgence of this dangerous force and a new iteration of the Islamic State; creating a power vacuum begging for the meddling influence of Russia; leaving northeastern Syria wide open for Iran to extend its reach, unimpeded, all the way from Tehran to the doorstep of our friends in Israel; and destroying the leverage we currently have to compel Bashar Assad to stop his slaughter of the Syrian people and negotiate an end to this terrible conflict and humanitarian catastrophe.

I want to make something clear: The United States has taken the fight to Syria and Afghanistan because that is where our enemies are. That is why we are there. Fighting terrorists, exercising leadership in troubled regions, and advancing U.S. interests around the world does not make us an evil empire or the world's policeman. It makes us a prudent and responsible world power that stands up for our own security and the freedom of others.

Alongside the 80 coalition partners that U.S. forces have led in the

counter-ISIS coalition, that is what we must continue to do. We must continue to provide support to the local forces that carry the lion's share of the responsibility to defend their homelands. This effort must continue to include our allies and partners, even the imperfect ones that sometimes behave rashly and dangerously, as both Saudi Arabia and Turkey have recently.

When it looked like President Trump would withdraw from Syria at the beginning of the year, 70—70—Senators joined in warning of the risks of precipitously withdrawing from Syria or Afghanistan. The veto-proof majority vote for my amendment to S. 1, the Strengthening America's Security in the Middle East Act, demonstrated strong and bipartisan appreciation of our enduring security interests in that region. The Senate spoke clearly and said that we must ensure that we have set the conditions for an enduring defeat of the terrorists before any withdrawal.

Regrettably, many of the Democratic Senators running for President, along with my friend the Democratic leader, parted with this bipartisan consensus and voted against this amendment. So I hope those aspiring Commanders in Chief are asked to explain how they reconcile their criticism of the administration today with their votes just a few months ago. Maybe they will even be asked on the debate stage this very evening.

I am heartened to hear that Vice President PENCE will soon lead a delegation to begin immediate talks with Turkey to end this violence.

I expect Turkish allies listen carefully to the anger from Washington, welcome our Vice President, and take steps to repair our important relationship. It would be a tragedy for both of our nations if Turkey's escalation in Syria imperils our common fight against ISIS and emboldens traditional adversaries like Iran and Russia. This would be bad for U.S. interests, but it would be terrible for Turkey.

I also look forward to discussing with Members on both sides and with the administration how the United States can stand with our partners and provide strong, principled, and consistent global leadership.

MEASURE PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—S. 2593

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I understand there is a bill at the desk due for a second reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the title of the bill for the second time.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2593) to amend title 31, United States Code, to provide for automatic continuing resolutions.

Mr. MCCONNELL. In order to place the bill on the calendar under the provision of rule XIV, I object to further proceedings.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection having been heard, the bill will be placed on the calendar.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

THE TRUMP ADMINISTRATION

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, over the past month, evidence has emerged that the President of the United States pressured a foreign leader to investigate one of his leading political rivals. A whistleblower inside the intelligence community first raised alarms that the President applied pressure on Ukrainian President Zelensky that would benefit President Trump politically. The President himself then released a memorandum of his conversation with President Zelensky, which demonstrably validated the whistleblower's concerns.

In the weeks that followed, the House has received testimony from a number of State Department officials who have filled in additional pieces to this very troubling puzzle. Rudy Giuliani's efforts to dig up dirt on the President's political rivals were well known within the State Department and the National Security Council. The Ambassador to the EU, Gordon Sondland, was heavily involved with Mr. Giuliani, and we continue to receive additional information about Mr. Sondland's participation. His scheduled testimony in the coming days will undoubtedly be relevant and important.

Amidst all of this, the White House has engaged in stonewalling and outright defiance of congressional prerogatives. The State Department instructed its officials not to comply with congressional subpoenas, the White House has refused to cooperate with the House impeachment inquiry, and the President has publicly and repeatedly sought to bully and intimidate the whistleblower.

As additional facts are unearthed, we have a responsibility to consider them with the best interest of our country in mind. The whistleblower was doing a courageous and patriotic act and must be protected. He must be protected. The Constitution made Congress a co-equal branch of government. That role must be respected. The matter at the heart of the inquiry concerns the very integrity of our democratic elections, and it must be investigated thoroughly, completely, and in a non-partisan manner.