

Senate: Fischer's approach to Trump an issue for opponent

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Raybould, a grocery executive, cites those depressed prices, decreasing farm profits and increasing farm bankruptcies as evidence of Fischer's lack of results for Nebraska's most important industry.

She questions Fischer's ability to act independently of Trump or GOP leadership, saying that were she in the Senate, she'd be holding up Trump's appointments, spending bills, doing whatever it took to get action on trade.

"She is not standing up for our agricultural economy," Raybould said in Lincoln at the headquarters of B&R Stores Inc., her family's grocery store chain. "She is not using her authority as a senator to influence the president on trade."

Fischer dismisses such talk as political opportunism by a candidate who is desperate for attention. The senator said she "didn't need a lecture on agriculture from someone playing farmer in new boots."

"The public fully understands my support for agriculture," Fischer said in an interview in Omaha. "I have a record in the Legislature, in communities, in economic development and in the Senate of getting things done."

The three main tools of a U.S. senator are making policy or law, providing congressional oversight and representing constituents, said Randall Adkins, a professor of political science at the University of Nebraska at Omaha.

Traditional approaches to lawmaking are more often successful but rarely newsworthy and harder to see, Adkins said. More aggressive approaches, while less often successful, tend to draw more attention to issues, he said.

Fischer's legislative record is lengthy on ag and trade. Recently, she's worked to combine multiple federal offices working to promote agricultural trade so people know where to go, what to spend and how to weigh results.

When Sen. Ben Sasse, R-Neb., moved off of the Senate Ag Committee in 2017, Fischer got party leadership in the Senate to make an exception and put her on the panel so the state would hold sway in a farm bill year.

Her re-election bid has been endorsed by the largest farm and agribusiness lobbying organizations in the state and nation. She has hosted the state and federal ag secretaries at her ranch.

She meets regularly with farmers, ranchers and ag groups, including soybean farmers last week. She talks with Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue and his undersecretaries, as well as with Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross.

She says she tells Trump about the tough economic times Nebraska farmers and ranchers are facing and about the economic dangers of trade disputes when ag and industry face fixed costs, including property taxes.

The president recently commented on the plight of farmers, saying they hadn't had a good year in 15 years, which Nebraskans would dispute. He also said he would have their backs in trade negotiations with other countries.

Both Fischer and Sasse have stressed to Trump the importance of working with allies and honoring trade deals, including the North American Free Trade Agreement with Canada and Mexico, and of trying to get back to a Trans Pacific Partnership in Asia.

Like Raybould, Republican Todd Watson, who challenged Fischer in the GOP primary, criticized Fischer for not going far enough, fast enough. He said the Senate could eliminate the administration's leeway on tariffs by doing its duty.

The Constitution, as written, grants the approval of tariffs to Congress, and the Senate, in its design, holds approval rights for trade deals. Congress, decades ago, handed its authority to the executive branch in statute.

Fischer says she stands up for legislative branch prerogatives. She backed Pennsylvania Sen. Pat Toomey's farm bill amendment that would have restricted the president's tariff authority, requiring congressional approval. She was one of

88 senators who approved a non-binding resolution last week asserting the Senate's authority on trade.

But, unlike Sasse, she has yet to publicly express support for any of several standalone bills to restrict presidential authority on trade or to co-sponsor one of the bills, a reticence Raybould says electing her would remedy.

Raybould says Nebraskans deserve more commitment from their senator than statements that bill sponsors have yet to make a compelling case. The threat of a new farm crisis on the horizon should be compelling enough, she said.

Fischer explains her lack of bill sponsorship as a remnant of her eight years in the Nebraska Legislature, when sponsors would sign up to back a bill then see it changed completely in committee or on the floor.

"I only support bills when I know what they say," Fischer said.

Fischer says she won't resort to the "obstructionist" tactics Raybould promises because she says they'll only harden Trump in his positions on trade, not move him, and risk cutting the state off from help producers need.

It's better to have a seat at the table than to throw it over, Fischer said, and Cabinet officials return fewer calls to people who anger the president.

Among the consequences of holding up nominations and federal spending bills, Fischer said, is the potential of a government shutdown, resulting in delayed farm payments or closed extension offices.

Raybould said she wouldn't be immovable. Her model for exerting power as a red-state Democrat would be former Sen. Ben Nelson's negotiations for his vote during the fight to pass the Affordable Care Act, she said. He secured more money for Nebraska, a move Republicans locally and nationally criticized, branding it the "Cornhusker kickback."

More aggressive action on trade and tariffs is necessary, Raybould said, to preserve jobs and markets for Nebraska products and manufactured goods. She said Americans need to maintain relationships with international customers.

Raybould points to Mexico's recent decision to look to South American countries including Brazil and Argentina to replace grains Mexicans order from the United States, including Nebraska.

She cited the experience of Behlen Manufacturing Co. of Columbus, which has seen the price of American steel Behlen uses to make its products increase.

Fischer "needs to use her authority as a senator, her leverage, every tool in her toolbox," Raybould said. In the grocery business, she said, if she treated customers the way the U.S. is treating buyers, they wouldn't have many.

Fischer pledges to continue to advocate publicly and work behind the scenes for agriculture and agribusiness with Trump, his administration and other members of Congress, including Democrats.

Raybould says she would be more direct and public about her disagreements with Trump, that she would take whatever steps are necessary to advance Nebraska's agricultural and agribusiness interests.

Farmers supporting Fischer have said they understand how Washington works and that making a scene won't do them as much good as having influence.

Farmers supporting Raybould have said many producers have debt and bills to pay and cannot afford to wait to see who, if anybody, wins Trump's trade wars.

The political complication in Nebraska is that many farmers and ranchers wanted the president to pick fights on trade because they didn't believe the old system was fair, said John Hansen of the Nebraska Farmers Union.

His members would like to see both Senate candidates have a more substantive discussion about how trade agreements should be improved. Instead, he said, they're arguing about style and approach.

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ASIAN-AMERICANS

Racial group has biggest income divide

THE WASHINGTON POST

Income inequality has risen steadily among all Americans since the 1970s. But the gap between rich and poor has grown the fastest — and is the widest — among Asians, who have displaced blacks as the most economically divided racial group in the United States.

The finding, in a report released Thursday by the Pew Research Center, paints a more complex economic portrait of Asian-Americans than is often captured by snapshots showing Asians at the top of the income ladder.

While Asians as a whole rank as the country's highest-earning group, economic gains for lower-income Asians between 1970 and 2016 trailed far behind those made by their counterparts in other racial and ethnic groups, the report said.

"Asians are often depicted as the highest-achieving group in America, but it's clear they are the most economically divided, with a significant share of Asian Americans lagging well behind lower-income whites," said Rakesh Kochhar, a senior researcher at Pew.

Rising inequality among Asians, the country's fastest-growing minority, can largely be explained by immigration patterns and the diverse reasons immigrants from an array of Asian countries settle in the United States, Kochhar said.

Immigrants, largely from China, India, Korea, the Philippines and Vietnam, accounted for 81 percent of the growth in the Asian adult population between 1970 and 2016. Nearly 80 percent of Asian adults in 2016 were foreign-born, compared with 45 percent in 1970.

Asian immigration surged



THE WASHINGTON POST

A man stops as a group including Sen. Bernie Sanders walks through San Francisco's Chinatown in 2016. Asians have displaced blacks as the most economically divided racial group in the U.S.

after the 1965 Immigration and Nationality Act, which favored family reunification. The end of the Vietnam War in 1975 brought a wave of refugees. One result, the report said, was that the share of new Asian immigrants working in high-skilled jobs dropped between 1970 and 1990.

A new wave of Asian immigrants came to the country after the 1990 Immigration Act that sought skilled workers during the tech boom. Many of the latest arrivals came from India, initially under the high-skilled H-1B visa program.

"Asian-Americans come from a wide range of countries and cultures with different assimilation trajectories," Kochhar said.

Three-quarters of Indian adults in the United States have at least a college degree, compared with less than a third of Vietnamese,

less than a fifth of Laotians and Cambodians, and about half of Chinese, Pakistanis and Filipinos.

Median household income varies from \$100,000 among Indians to \$36,000 among Burmese. Poverty rates among Asians are as high as 35 percent among Burmese.

Income distribution among Asians has gone from being one of the most equal in the U.S. to being the most unequal over the past five decades, the report said. During that time, the gap in the standard of living between Asians near the top and the bottom of the income ladder nearly doubled.

In 2016, Asians in the top 10 percent of income distribution earned nearly 10.7 times as much as Asians in the bottom 10 percent. In 1970, the wealthiest Asians earned 6.1 times as much as the poorest Asians.

Among all Americans in

2016, the wealthiest earned 8.7 times as much as the poorest — a steady but more moderate increase in the wealth gap from 1970, when the wealthiest Americans earned 6.9 times as much as the poorest.

The income of the highest-earning Asians — those in the top 10 percent — nearly doubled from 1970 to 2016 to \$133,529, the most of any group. Asians in the bottom 10 percent increased their earnings by only 11 percent during this time to \$12,478 — less than the earnings of lower-income whites, who made \$15,094 in 2016.

But researchers do not expect the gaping income divide among Asians to last.

"You will eventually end up with a more settled native-born Asian-American population," Kochhar said, "so the rapid rise in inequality in this population may be a transitory story."

INSIDE BUSINESS

To place your business announcements, contact the Announcement Consultant — call 402-444-1328, email announcements@owh.com or online at Omaha.com. Deadline is Monday, one week prior to publication.

AWARDS

Centris Federal Credit Union



Steve Edgerton

Edgerton Awarded Nebraska Professional of the Year

The 2018 Professional Distinguished Service Award was presented to **Steve Edgerton of Centris Federal Credit Union** at the Nebraska Credit Union League's recent Annual Convention.

Edgerton has been heavily involved in the state and federal credit union movement for over 40 years. He began his career in credit unions when he was hired as Director of Audit Services for the League. He was promoted to Vice President in 1983 and was named President/CEO of the Association in January of 1988.

In 1997, **Edgerton** accepted a position at Centris and currently serves as Vice President, Corporate Operations & Government Affairs Officer.

NEW HIRES

Hilgers Graben PLLC



Trent Tanner

Hilgers Graben Announces Addition of Attorney Trent Tanner

Hilgers Graben PLLC is excited to announce the addition of **Trent Tanner** to its litigation team in Nebraska.

Formerly an associate with Wheeler Trigg O'Donnell LLP in Denver, **Trent** brings a breadth of experience in complex

porate Operations & Government Affairs Officer.

"I am truly humbled by this award as Tex Gunzelman was an early mentor that shaped my devotion to credit unions and their philosophies. Tex was also responsible for creating my interest in being a spokesperson for credit unions in fostering positive legislation in Lincoln and Washington, D.C. for credit unions," **Edgerton** said. "I had significant opportunities when working at the League to help credit unions however, I am blessed that I have had the opportunity for the past twenty years at **Centris** to continue helping credit unions and helping make **Centris** a trusted financial partner for our members. I have learned far more from hundreds of board members, executives and staff that I have been acquainted with over the past forty years than I can ever give back!"

The L.A. "Tex" Gunzelman Professional Distinguished Service Award is the highest individual professional honor that can be bestowed upon a credit union leader in the state of Nebraska. "This is a great honor for Steve and we're proud of his accomplishments and advocacy for credit unions," said Steve Swannstrom, **Centris** President/CEO.

NEW HIRES

First National Bank



Tony Essay

First National Bank Announces New Director, Private Client Services

First National Bank has hired **Tony Essay** as Director, Private Client Services for the Wealth Management group, announced Craig Sall, Senior Managing Director, Private Client Services. **Essay** specializes in meeting the needs of high net worth individuals, families, professionals, executives and closely held business owners. He has ten years of experience in the financial services industry.

"We're pleased to welcome

Tony to First National Bank," said Sall. "His expertise in the financial services industry will help our clients achieve their overall wealth management goals."

Essay earned a Bachelor of Arts degree from Chadron State College and Juris Doctorate from the University of Nebraska College of Law with a concentrated study in Business Planning, Estate Planning and Taxation. He also holds the Certified Trust and Financial Advisor certification through Cannon Financial Institute.

Essay serves as a member of the Nebraska State Bar Association and the American Bar Association. He is a volunteer with Brush Up Nebraska Paint-A-Thon and previously served on the Board of Directors of the Lincoln Children's Museum and the Lincoln Estate Planning Council.

First National Bank is a subsidiary of First National of Nebraska. First National of Nebraska and its affiliates have more than \$21 billion in assets and 5,000 employee associates. Primary banking offices are located in Nebraska, Colorado, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, South Dakota and Texas.

APPOINTMENTS

Security National Bank



Joseph Borghoff

Security National Bank Appoints New Trust Officer

Security National Bank of Omaha proudly announces **Joseph Borghoff** as a trust officer in the wealth management division. **Borghoff** is based at the bank's headquarters at Three Pacific Place, 1120 S. 101st Street in Omaha. In his role, **Borghoff** will be responsible for administering trusts, estates and conservatorship appointments. Additionally, he

will assist individuals in developing their financial and estate plans in an effort of achieving their life goals.

Borghoff has nearly 10 years of experience in financial and law services. He holds a bachelor's degree from the University of Nebraska at Lincoln, master's degree from Bellevue University, and a doctoral degree from Creighton University School of Law. **Borghoff** also served as a lead editor for the Creighton Law Review and a member of the Moot Court Board.

Security National Bank is one of the Midwest's largest privately-held community banks with nearly \$860 million in assets. The bank has 13 retail banking locations in the Omaha-Council Bluffs Metro Area, and a Trust Services and Loan Production Office in Des Moines, Iowa. For more than 53 years, the Bank has offered comprehensive financial solutions for business and private banking, cash management, wealth management, employee benefits, consumer and mortgage needs.