

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

June 25, 2019

Ambassador Robert E. Lighthizer
United States Trade Representative
600 17th Street NW
Washington, DC 20508

Dear Ambassador Lighthizer,

We appreciate the opportunities many of us have had to meet with you to discuss the revised North American Free Trade agreement (NAFTA) and other trade issues. As new Members of Congress representing diverse districts across the United States with a range of views on the opportunities and challenges created by trade agreements, we are united in favor of trade rules that benefit workers and the public. We welcome your recognition that our concerns must be engaged in order to secure an agreement that creates good jobs, increases wages and income, and safeguards the environment and public health.

We are writing to reaffirm our interest in working with you to improve the revised NAFTA deal signed on November 30, 2018 by the United States, Mexico, and Canada. That text is essentially NAFTA 2.0: while it includes some important improvements from the original NAFTA, critical unfinished business would perpetuate NAFTA's damage. The new text also includes new terms that we oppose, including some that would lock in high U.S. drug prices. We can do better. We all agree that it is important to seek new terms of trade for North America to benefit working families. That means revising NAFTA's rules that have made it easier for corporations to outsource jobs, suppress wages and farm incomes, and degrade the environment. Furthermore, we must not add new corporate handouts that harm North American families.

Unless the current text's labor and environmental standards are strengthened, and swift and certain enforcement mechanisms are added, corporations will continue to outsource jobs and pollution to Mexico where they can violate international labor rights and pay workers unconscionably low wages. Disincentivizing that practice is good for North American workers.

Unless the new monopoly rights added to NAFTA 2.0 for pharmaceutical firms are eliminated, they will lock in policies that keep U.S. drug prices outrageously high. Reducing medicine prices is a demand that unites Americans nationwide. A decade ago, Congressional Democrats and then-President George W. Bush agreed on a standard for intellectual property terms in trade agreements that promoted both innovation and access to affordable medicines. That standard is not met in NAFTA 2.0.

Unless NAFTA 2.0's weak environmental terms are strengthened, firms will continue to outsource air, water, and climate pollution and jobs to Mexico. And, while we applaud the significant rollback of Investor-State Dispute Settlement (ISDS) in the NAFTA 2.0 text, the terms preserving ISDS rights for U.S. oil and gas firms with contracts with Mexico's Hydrocarbons Authority expose Mexican environmental laws to attack and must be eliminated.

Finally, consumers' right to know about where and how their food is produced must also be protected. Mexico and Canada already have used trade rules to undermine the food labeling that America's farmers and ranchers support and the transparency that consumers demand. A final NAFTA package must restore the Country of Origin (COOL) meat-labeling program passed by Congress and affirmed by U.S. courts.

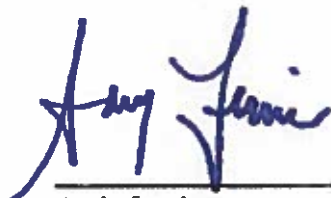
These improvements are necessary for a renegotiated NAFTA to obtain the broad support it needs to pass. Improving the deal is the path to codifying the advancements achieved to date in the NAFTA 2.0 text, including the roll back of Investor-State Dispute Resolution, stronger rules of origin, the linkage between market access and wage levels, and the terms that require Mexico to end the wage-suppressing protection contract system.

Every week, NAFTA's investor protections and lack of enforceable labor and environmental standards incentivize corporations to turn middle class U.S. jobs into sweatshop jobs in Mexico. In Mexico, workers are paid less per day than their U.S. counterparts make per hour to produce the same products in the same high-tech modern plants. Mexican manufacturing wages are now 40 percent lower than in China. This has only intensified the downward pressure on U.S. workers' wages.

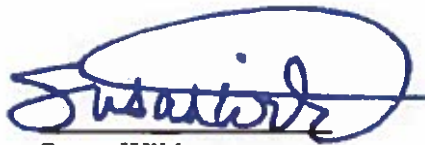
Withdrawing from NAFTA will not raise wages here or in Mexico, nor will it reverse NAFTA's long track record of outsourcing middle class jobs and pollution. That is why we call for a renegotiated NAFTA that supports working families, a clean environment, and healthy communities in all three countries.

We look forward to continuing to work together to achieve that outcome.

Sincerely,



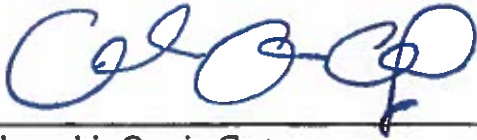
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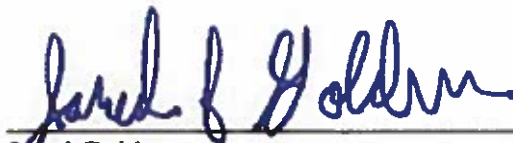
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