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STAFF DIRECTOR

# Congress of the United States

## U.S. House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

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MINORITY CHIEF COUNSEL

July 17, 2014

The Honorable Michael Froman  
United States Trade Representative  
Office of the United States Trade Representative  
600 17<sup>th</sup> St, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20508

Dear Ambassador Froman:

We are strong supporters of the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) negotiations. We believe that a TPP agreement, if done right, has enormous potential to create U.S. jobs through increased exports and level the playing field for American workers and companies. In addition, the agreement can be a model for global trade rules, unite participants economically through enhanced trade and investment, and solidify relationships on other issues, including foreign policy and national security, as well. We are committed and eager to work with you to implement a good deal for America.

While progress has been made in the TPP negotiations, there is a long way to go to finalize an acceptable deal. Therefore, we were surprised when the President recently announced an ambitious timeline for completing the TPP negotiations, potentially by November, without mentioning how he would ensure the enactment into law of Trade Promotion Authority (TPA) before concluding TPP negotiations. TPA must be enacted into law before the President completes TPP for two important reasons.

First, TPA shows our trading partners that the U.S. government speaks with one voice. Without TPA, the Administration simply is not in the strongest position in its negotiations with our trading partners. That means that any agreement reached cannot be the best agreement obtainable for American workers, farmers, and businesses. The positions that many of our trading partners are taking in the negotiations are unacceptable, demonstrating that the Administration has not yet been able to achieve the necessary market access and rules outcomes to ensure a successful TPP negotiation. We believe that if the Administration were negotiating with the authority of TPA, it would be able to achieve a stronger agreement worthy of Congressional support.

Second, the Administration negotiates trade agreements under a delegation of authority from the Congress. TPA is the process by which Congress gives the Administration that authority and sets out negotiating objectives, strengthening and reinforcing the consultative relationship between Congress and the Administration. Concluding TPP – or any major trade agreement – without TPA undermines the Constitutional role of Congress over trade policy. Only Administrations that work closely with Congress and make it an equal partner in the negotiations are successful in passing and implementing trade deals.

Because of the critical importance of TPA in ensuring a successful outcome in the TPP negotiations, we will not support TPP if the agreement, even an agreement in principle, is completed before TPA is enacted. Once TPA is enacted, we will have laid the necessary groundwork to bring to conclusion a solid TPP agreement that will pass Congressional muster, and we will work with you to achieve this goal. Congress will not approve a TPP agreement that does not meet the objectives Congress first establishes through TPA. Therefore, TPA is the key to achieving the outcome we all want to see.

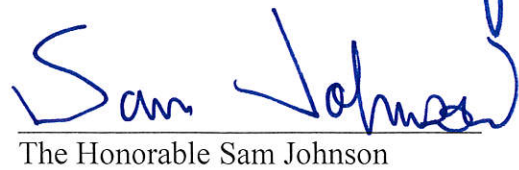
We call on the Administration to continue to push our trading partners to improve upon their current offers in the TPP negotiations. At the same time, we call for the entire Administration, including the President, to immediately and fully engage with the House, the Senate, and stakeholders to achieve enactment of the Bipartisan Congressional Trade Priorities Act (H.R. 3830) well before the end of 2014. Progress should continue with our TPP partners even as we work domestically with you and the President now to build support for – and ultimately pass – TPA.

We are ready and willing to work closely with our colleagues on both sides of the aisle and in the House and Senate to achieve this outcome. We look forward to working closely with the Administration to ensure the successful enactment of TPA and the subsequent successful conclusion of TPP.

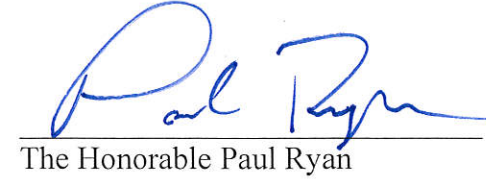
Sincerely,

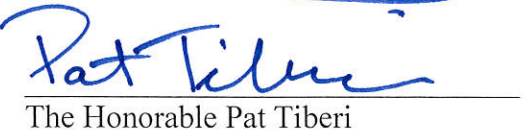
  
The Honorable Dave Camp

  
The Honorable Devin Nunes

  
The Honorable Sam Johnson

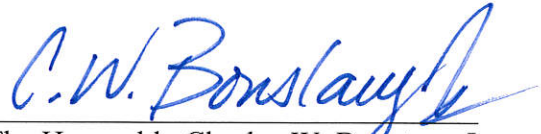
  
The Honorable Kevin Brady

  
The Honorable Paul Ryan

  
The Honorable Pat Tiberi



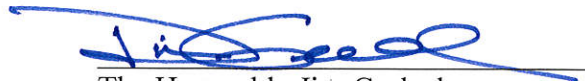
The Honorable Dave G. Reichert



The Honorable Charles W. Boustany Jr.



The Honorable Peter J. Roskam



The Honorable Jim Gerlach



The Honorable Tom Price



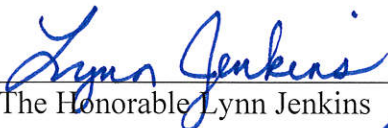
The Honorable Vern Buchanan



The Honorable Adrian Smith



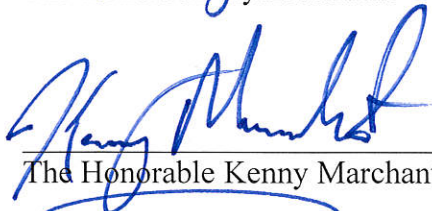
The Honorable Aaron Schock



The Honorable Lynn Jenkins



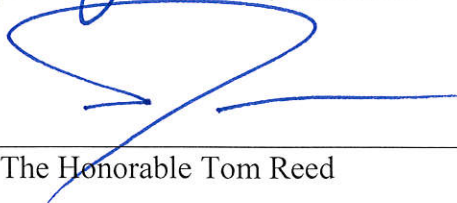
The Honorable Erik Paulsen



The Honorable Kenny Marchant



The Honorable Diane Black



The Honorable Tom Reed



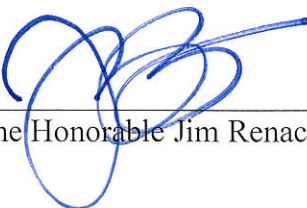
The Honorable Todd Young



The Honorable Mike Kelly



The Honorable Tim Griffin



The Honorable Jim Renacci