

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

June 29, 2021

President Joseph R. Biden
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Biden:

We write to urge you to nominate an individual for the role of Chief Agricultural Negotiator at the Office of the United States Trade Representative (USTR). As you know, trade is essential to the livelihood of the American agriculture industry as it spurs economic opportunity for farmers, ranchers, and our rural communities. By promoting the importance of improved and expanded market access for U.S. agriculture, a Chief Agricultural Negotiator would help expand our agricultural trade and enhance the agricultural economy of our country.

Sound agriculture trade policy is imperative for our producers as many commodities are export dependent and rely on a level playing field in foreign markets. In fact, 95 percent of the world's consumers live outside of the United States, and more than 20 percent of U.S. farm income is generated through exports. With U.S. agricultural production outpacing domestic demand for many commodities, American farmers and agribusinesses rely on global markets to sustain prices and revenues. As a result, agricultural exports have grown steadily over the last few decades, reaching over \$135 billion in 2019, up from \$46.1 billion in 1994. This growth in capacity has also spurred job creation, especially in rural communities, as agricultural exports in 2018 supported 1,048,000 full-time jobs, including 691,000 jobs in the nonfarm sector.

Increasing U.S. exports is not only beneficial for our economy, but it also raises the bar globally in setting high environmental and labor standards and increasing lower-emission agricultural production. American producers lead the world in efficient and sustainable agricultural production. For example, no other country is as efficient as the U.S., in beef production, producing 18 percent of global supply with only 6 percent of the world's herd. Compared to 1977, today's ranchers produce the same amount of beef with 33 percent fewer cattle. Likewise, crops utilizing American biotechnology can help growers increase crop yields while reducing fertilizer use and associated emissions. With worldwide demand and prices for food on the rise, we must ensure there is no one better equipped to lead the charge of feeding a hungry world than American producers.

Over the last few years, we have seen a remarkable development in global market access driven by a combination of strong consumer demand and robust trade policy. For this success to continue, it is critical a Chief Agricultural Negotiator at USTR is nominated and confirmed. During previous Administrations, this role has been instrumental in prioritizing agriculture in trade agreements and eliminating numerous non-tariff barriers. For example, our producers gained expanded market access through USMCA, while USTR was also able to secure

enforceable labor and environmental standards. In order to ensure that U.S. farmers and ranchers receive the full benefits of recent agreements and are prioritized as you explore new market access opportunities, it is imperative that the role of Chief Agricultural Negotiator is filled.

For several years, our producers have experienced price declines, retaliatory tariffs, severe weather, drought, and other hardships that have been out of their control. Most recently, the COVID-19 pandemic has tested our supply chain resilience and reminded Americans that having an affordable and abundant supply of food, independent of foreign adversaries, is essential. For example, fresh vegetable exports in 2020 to Japan and Taiwan were down 35 percent and 12 percent, respectively. It is critical the Chief Agricultural Negotiator promotes American agriculture around the world and works vigorously to advance existing and future markets for our producers.

As members of Congress, we would work closely with the Chief Agricultural Negotiator and your administration to ensure that American agriculture is prioritized in all trade policy. America's farmers and ranchers rely on you to maintain our dominance in this industry and to protect our nation's long-term food security. A Chief Agricultural Negotiator would represent your administration in important conversations with our trading partners, as well as Congress, and further our principles as a leading agricultural nation.

Sincerely,



Jodey C. Arrington
Member of Congress

Kevin Hern
Member of Congress

Adrian Smith
Member of Congress

Devin Nunes
Member of Congress

Suzan K. DelBene
Member of Congress



Jimmy Panetta
Member of Congress

Ron Kind
Member of Congress

Stephanie Murphy
Member of Congress

Mike Thompson
Member of Congress

Brad R. Wenstrup, D.P.M.
Member of Congress

Jackie Walorski
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Ronny L. Jackson
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Tracey Mann
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Antonio Delgado
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Cindy Axne
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Chris Jacobs
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Troy Balderson
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Ann McLane Kuster
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A. Drew Ferguson, IV
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Jim Costa
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Pete Sessions
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Tom Reed
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Michelle Fischbach
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Tom Emmer
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August Pfluger
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Barry Moore
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James R. Baird
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