

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

May 9, 2022

The Honorable Katherine Tai  
United States Trade Representative  
600 17<sup>th</sup> Street NW  
Washington, D.C. 20508

The Honorable Thomas Vilsack  
Secretary of Agriculture  
1400 Independence Avenue SW  
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear Ambassador Tai and Secretary Vilsack:

Advancing U.S. economic interests – particularly in the Indo-Pacific region – requires meaningful and enforceable market access commitments. We are concerned that the Biden administration is foregoing America’s trade and strategic leadership by failing to pursue such commitments, whether through its Indo-Pacific Economic Framework (IPEF) or through its decision not to pursue comprehensive free trade agreements, which was reflected in the President’s 2022 Trade Policy Agenda. The lack of ambitious market-opening initiatives not only disadvantages U.S. workers, farmers, ranchers, and businesses today, it jeopardizes America’s competitiveness, resilience, and security in the long-term.

Unlike traditional trade agreements, the IPEF is not expected to include critical market access commitments. The failure to include such commitments puts American exporters, including agricultural producers, at a competitive disadvantage in the global market. It also signals to the world that the United States is not committed to fully engaging commercially or strategically in the region. Thus, while some aspects of the IPEF may have potential, it is not a credible counterweight to the market-opening agreements that other countries, including China, are actively advancing.

America cannot afford to sit on the sidelines in trade. For generations, a large part of our nation’s economic success has been based on the United States advocating for more, not less, open markets. For example, U.S. farm and food product exports grew from \$46.1 billion in 1994 to more than \$177 billion in 2021, which was largely due to greater market access opportunities for American exporters. These U.S. exports lead to good-paying jobs at home and help spread the reach of American influence abroad. Free trade agreements are also far from relics of the past, as Ambassador Tai recently implied at a hearing before the Senate Finance Committee. In fact, 13 of the 16 enacted U.S. free trade agreements were passed by Congress since the turn of this century. Opening new markets for customers, reducing barriers for business, and enforcing robust trade agreements are cornerstones of our national prosperity.

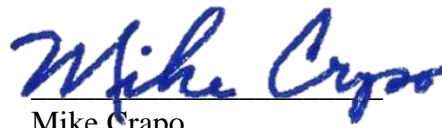
Regrettably, U.S. trade leadership has thus far taken a backseat to other priorities under this administration. But, as you know, global trade does not simply pause until the administration deems it worthy of pursuing. Opening new markets means more high-paying jobs for workers and lower-cost goods for consumers at home. The administration’s failure to engage on Trade


Promotion Authority or find other avenues to open markets means our workers and producers will continue to lose ground to competitors. In contrast, China continues to advance its Belt and Road Initiative; it recently concluded the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership, the world's largest free trade agreement; and it now aspires to join the higher quality Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership.

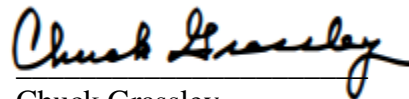
We respectfully urge you to include market access and enforceable commitments as part of the IPEF, and any other U.S. trade agreements, and we stand ready to work with you to strengthen American trade leadership.

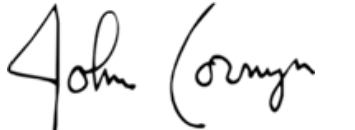
Sincerely,


  
John Thune  
United States Senator

  
Mike Crapo  
United States Senator


  
John Boozman  
United States Senator


  
Chuck Grassley  
United States Senator


  
John Cornyn  
United States Senator

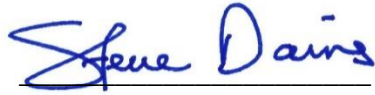
  
Richard Burr  
United States Senator

  
Rob Portman  
United States Senator

  
Pat Toomey  
United States Senator

  
Tim Scott  
United States Senator

  
Bill Cassidy, M.D.  
United States Senator



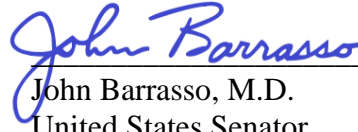
Steve Daines  
United States Senator



Todd Young  
United States Senator



Ben Sasse  
United States Senator



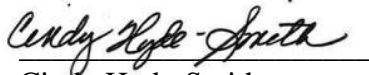
John Barrasso, M.D.  
United States Senator



John Hoeven  
United States Senator



Joni K. Ernst  
United States Senator



Cindy Hyde-Smith  
United States Senator



Roger Marshall, M.D.  
United States Senator



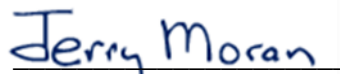
Tommy Tuberville  
United States Senator



Deb Fischer  
United States Senator



James M. Inhofe  
United States Senator



Jerry Moran  
United States Senator



Ted Cruz  
United States Senator



M. Michael Rounds  
United States Senator