

**Citizens Trade Campaign • Family Farm Defenders • Food & Water Watch
Federation of Southern Cooperatives/Land Assistance Fund
International Brotherhood of Teamsters
Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy • League of Rural Voters
National Dairy Producers Organization, Inc. • National Family Farm Coalition
National Farmers Union • Rural Coalition/Coalición Rural**

The Honorable Collin C. Peterson
House of Representatives
2109 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

March 4, 2013

Dear Ranking Member Peterson:

As the Administration continues negotiating new standard-setting trade pacts for the Asia-Pacific region and beyond, we ask that any trade policymaking authority granted to the executive branch include measures specifically designed to advance the interests of America's dairy farmers, farm workers, processors and consumers.

The pending Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) Free Trade Agreement could have tremendous impacts on where and how dairy products are produced and processed. We are concerned about market access offers, sanitary and phytosanitary standards and other provisions of the TPP — and their relation to uncertainty regarding the Farm Bill. New market access for New Zealand's monopolistic dairy sector would be especially damaging to U.S. dairy farmers and those who produce and process nonfat dry milk, butterfat or cheese.

The U.S. dairy industry generates \$140 billion in economic activity and employs an estimated 900,000 workers, while providing nourishment to millions more. The nation simply cannot afford to compete with dairy imports produced under unfair conditions. It is critical that Congress provide clear direction and oversight regarding expectations for U.S. negotiators in order to avoid serious disruptions to agricultural sector livelihoods.

The surest and simplest way for Congress to achieve this outcome is by writing safeguards directly into whatever trade policymaking authority it decides to grant the executive. Rather than reinstating the Nixon-era "Fast Track," or its more-recent iterations of "Trade Promotion Authority," Congress should create new trade policymaking procedures that:

- Require that, prior to continuing negotiations, the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative publish all negotiating texts, consult with all committees of jurisdiction and interested stakeholders and provide a thorough and public trade balance assessment and other analyses of how a proposed trade pact would impact the U.S. dairy industry;

- Provide trade negotiators with mandatory negotiating objectives that guarantee that U.S. goals regarding food safety, food sovereignty, conservation, elimination of currency manipulation and worker rights are met; and
- Include a process by which a majority of the Congress must vote to certify that the pact is in the public interest and that the negotiating objectives have been met before the pact can be signed and negotiations formally concluded.

The TPP's potential impact on the U.S. dairy sector is too important to adopt a "wait and see" approach towards the pact's negotiation. We urge you to take the proactive steps requested here, and we look forward to working with you to create other opportunities that benefit U.S. dairy producers and consumers.

Sincerely,

Citizens Trade Campaign

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For more information, please contact Kathy Ozer of the National Family Farm Coalition at (202) 543-5675 or Mike Dolan of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters at (202) 624-6891.