

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

May 18, 2010

The Honorable Felipe Calderon Hinojosa
President
The United Mexican States

Dear President Calderon,

The strong and enduring partnership between the United States and Mexico makes both of our nations more vibrant democracies and stronger economies. Our prosperity as individual nations and as partners is linked by mutual goals, values, beliefs and economic cooperation. As members of Congress we understand the importance of a strong, respectful bilateral relationship with Mexico. We pledge our leadership as we seek solutions to the range of problems that make the relationship of our two countries fall short of its full potential.

We want to raise to your attention an issue, that while not of the magnitude of many that you face, offers the opportunity for a resolution that is mutually beneficial to both countries. The supplies of fresh potatoes produced domestically in Mexico are not adequate in quantity to meet the needs of Mexican consumers and processors on a year round basis. The resulting shortages of raw product potato processing facilities idle for months at a time and leave workers without work or paychecks. The high price of fresh table potatoes faced by Mexican consumers in the central market place reduces their purchasing power and overall welfare.

For nearly ten years potato growers in the United States have attempted to obtain the opportunity to provide fresh potatoes to Mexican consumers, retailers and processors. Access to high quality U.S. fresh potatoes at prices which are lower than domestically produced potatoes will improve the well being of Mexican consumers and the productivity of Mexican potato processors. Currently limited shipments of U.S. potatoes are allowed to areas within 26 kilometers of the border. All U.S. potatoes entering Mexico are brushed or washed to eliminate soil in order to manage phytosanitary risks. Similar procedures are employed for table potatoes produced in Mexico allowing them to move throughout the country with no restriction to the 26 kilometer border area. In addition, U.S. potato exports to Mexico are treated to prevent their viability as seed potatoes further reducing phytosanitary risk. Treating U.S. potato imports in a similar manner as potatoes produced in Mexico would be good for Mexican consumers and would encourage the mutually beneficial trade relationship we both seek.

We look forward to working with you to address this issue and others of mutual benefit to our countries. Again we pledge our leadership and cooperation to that end.

Sincerely,



Michael Bennet
U.S. Senator



John T. Salazar
Member of Congress



Rick Larsen
Member of Congress



Doc Hastings
Member of Congress



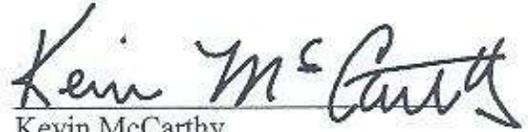
Walt Minnick
Member of Congress



Mike Simpson
Member of Congress



Betsy Markey
Member of Congress



Kevin McCarthy
Member of Congress

