



Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

July 1, 2011

President Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20230

Dear President Obama,

Starting today, businesses from the European Union (EU) and Canada will have a competitive advantage over U.S. farmers, manufacturers and service providers in two important overseas markets. As trade agreements between the EU and South Korea, and Canada and Colombia go into effect, the drivers of the U.S. economy have been thrown onto an unequal playing field with our foreign competitors – leading to a loss of current market share, lost opportunities to expand in these markets, and lost jobs at a time when our economy can least afford it.

This situation was preventable. As you know, these trade agreements were previously negotiated to eliminate the steep barriers for U.S. products to enter South Korea, Colombia, and Panama. American farmers, manufacturers and service providers are now paying the price for your Administration's failure over the last 18 months to send these agreements to Congress for an up or down vote.

As the representative of a state where one in three jobs are dependent on exports, I understand that expanding foreign market access is a no-cost job creator. It is estimated that every billion dollars in new exports create 8,000 jobs. At a time when unemployment rates are at a record high, it is more imperative than ever to work aggressively to expand overseas markets for U.S. farmers, manufacturers and service providers, and quick passage of these pending agreements must be a key part of this effort.

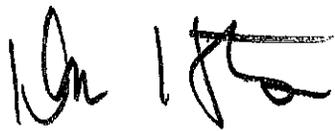
With the implementation of South Korea's trade agreement with the EU and Colombia's agreement with Canada, the stakes have been raised even higher. It is no longer a matter of a loss in potential exports. Our current market share in these countries is now in jeopardy, as our competitors' products can now enter the countries duty-free while U.S. businesses face significant tariffs. South Korea is currently our seventh largest export market at a value of \$38.8

billion. Colombia is a \$12 billion market for U.S. goods, and the fourth largest economy in Latin America. Once U.S. exporters lose that market share, it will be very difficult to get back.

On May 4th of this year, senior officials within the White House indicated that the pending trade agreements were ready to send to Congress for approval. On May 16th, United States Trade Representative Ambassador Ron Kirk and National Economic Council Advisor Gene Sperling stated that the Administration would not send the agreements to Congress unless the House and Senate agreed to reauthorize an expansion of the Trade Adjustment Assistance Act.

After years of delay and with a 9.1 percent unemployment rate, I find it unacceptable that you are holding these job-creating agreements hostage. I strongly urge you to stop playing political games, and send these agreements to Congress for approval immediately – before further damage can be done to the U.S. economy. Our growers, manufacturers, and service providers simply cannot afford any further delays.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Doc Hastings", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Doc Hastings
Member of Congress