May 19, 2015

The Honorable Paul Ryan  The Honorable Sander Levin
Chairman  Ranking Member
House Committee on Ways and Means  House Committee on Ways and Means
1102 Longworth House Office Building  1106 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515  Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Ryan and Ranking Member Levin:

As the House of Representatives considers trade promotion authority (TPA) legislation, we write to emphasize the importance of strong enforcement of our trade laws.

We recognize that opening new markets to American-made products through free trade agreements is critical to expanding the U.S. economy and creating jobs. And while Congress must provide the Administration with the appropriate tools to negotiate trade deals, we should assure that the American people and U.S. businesses will be protected against manipulative and unfair foreign competition. Along with TPA, we must ensure that our trade agreements and trade laws will be fully and vigorously enforced. Too often, foreign nations do not live up to the obligations they agreed to in trade agreements, leaving U.S. businesses to face trade distorting practices that put them at a competitive disadvantage.

When our trading partners engage in unfair practices that harm American industry, one recourse for U.S. farmers and manufacturers is to petition the federal government to enforce our trade laws. Unfortunately, the effectiveness of those laws has been weakened over time as exporters have developed evasive trade distorting practices and schemes. Our trade laws and remedies have been outpaced by enforcement challenges and prolific evasion, and the U.S. has become less competitive as a result of our inability to counteract these unfair practices. Therefore, we urge the Committee to consider enforcement provisions to improve the effectiveness of our trade laws. Strengthening the range of available tools to combat evasion of our trade remedy laws would go a long way in promoting fairer competition for U.S. industry.

Addressing trade enforcement issues will give the American business community confidence that the U.S. government will fight for a level playing field for our farmers and manufacturers. Maintaining strong trade laws and vigorous enforcement of those laws are critical elements of our efforts to advance a pro-growth trade agenda that will expand the economy and create jobs.

Sincerely,

Rick Crawford  Bill Johnson
Member of Congress  Member of Congress
cc:

The Honorable Pat Tiberi
Chairman
Subcommittee on Trade
1203 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Charles B. Rangel
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Trade
2354 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515