

In Support of the U.S. - Mexico Relationship

An Open Letter to President Barack Obama and the U.S. Congress



Dear President Obama and Members of Congress:

As the United States welcomes Mexican President Felipe Calderón, the undersigned organizations and businesses want to remind you and the American people of the close relationship and vital economic ties the United States has with our neighbor to the South.

Mexico has become over the past 20 years a true multi-party democracy, with a free press, competitive elections, and checks and balances in its federal government. Mexico is an important ally to the United States on many issues, a friendly country and a good neighbor that espouses many of our core values. Mexico today has a functioning market economy, with a majority of its citizens now classified as middle class.

These impressive changes can be largely attributed to the policies implemented by Mexico as a result of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), which includes the United States, Canada and Mexico. NAFTA has allowed Mexico to grow its way into an upper middle income economy – one of the world's top 10 – and to establish the kind of stable market-based system necessary to build a modern liberal democracy. At the same time, the United States has reaped the benefits of that agreement, with Mexico becoming our second largest (and growing) export market.

As you know, exports are critical to the United States, and the new National Export Initiative reflects the correct vision and urgent need to find in our exports the platform for a sustained recovery. Increasing exports is the wise and proper approach to reducing our current account deficit, but it can only be done by deepening – not abandoning – our successful North American partnership with Canada and Mexico and by establishing similar relationships with other countries around the world.

It is our firm belief that we must cooperate with Mexico to make full use of North America's potential. Greater integration between our nations will result in a more efficient production chain and will enhance the region's competitiveness. Therefore, our shared objective should be to jointly enter new and growing markets such as China and Brazil.

In the current global economic environment, the United States must set an example to the world and, more importantly, to our NAFTA partners about the importance of trade relationships. One important first step would be to resolve the trucking issue. When NAFTA was negotiated it was agreed that the borders of the three countries would be open to trucks as long as they complied with all regulations applicable in the country of destination. Solving this issue would decrease freight costs and delivery times in North America, but more importantly, it would improve our relationship with Mexico and would promote the integration between our nations.

It also is imperative that the United States and Canada continue to support Mexico's efforts in its war on drugs, mainly in fighting money laundering and the North-South arms trade. Our common success is not only relevant as a law enforcement matter but also as a regional security issue that is directly related to our competitiveness in world markets.

Certainly, there are many other areas in which we can find common ground, and we urge you to work to strengthen the economic ties between Mexico and the United States and to make stronger our NAFTA partnership with Mexico and Canada.

• American Apparel & Footwear Association • American Chamber of Commerce of Mexico • American Farm Bureau Federation • American Feed Industry Association • American Frozen Food Institute • American Meat Institute • American Natural Soda Ash Corporation (ANSAC) • American Potato Trade Alliance • American Seed Trade Association • American Soybean Association • Amway • Appleton Papers • Association of Equipment Manufacturers • AstraZeneca Pharmaceuticals LP • CA, Inc. • California Farm Bureau Federation • California Strawberry Commission • California Table Grape Commission • Caterpillar • Commodity Markets Council • Consumer Electronics Association • Corn Refiners Association • Cranberry Institute • Direct Selling Association • Distilled Spirits Council of the United States • Emergency Committee for American Trade (ECAT) • Free Trade Alliance • General Electric Company • Georgia Fruit and Vegetable Growers Association • Glanbia USA • Herbalife International of America, Inc. • Idaho Potato Commission • International Dairy Foods Association • Magination Consulting International • Manchester Trade Ltd. • Mars Incorporated • Mary Kay Inc. • National Association of Manufacturers • National Association of State Departments of Agriculture • National Association of Wheat Growers • National Barley Growers Association • National Cattlemen's Beef Association • National Chicken Council • National Confectioners Association • National Council of Farmer Cooperatives • National Foreign Trade Council • National Grain and Feed Association • National Grange • National Meat Association • National Milk Producers Federation • National Oilseed Processors Association • National Pork Producers Council • National Potato Council • National Renderers Association • National Sorghum Producers • National Turkey Federation • North American Equipment Dealers Association • North American Export Grain Association • Northwest Horticultural Council • Ocean Spray Cranberries, Inc. • Oregon Association of Nurseries • Pet Food Institute • Produce Marketing Association • Retail Industry Leaders Association • RR Donnelley • Samuels International Associates, Inc. • Sioux Preme Packing Co. • Sweetener Users Association • U.S. Chamber of Commerce • U.S. Dairy Export Council • U.S. Grains Council • U.S. Wheat Associates • United States Association of Importers of Textiles and Apparel • USA Poultry & Egg Export Council • USA Rice Federation • US-Mexico Chamber of Commerce • Washington State Potato Commission • Western Growers Association