

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

December 13, 2013

Ambassador Michael Froman  
Office of the United States Trade Representative  
600 17<sup>th</sup> Street NW  
Washington, DC 20508

Secretary Tom Vilsack  
United States Department of Agriculture  
1400 Independence Avenue SW  
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Ambassador Froman and Secretary Vilsack:

We write to emphasize the importance of addressing market access barriers to U.S. pork exports in the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP).

We know that you are both well aware how important exports are to the economic well-being of U.S. pork producers and the U.S. economy as a whole. U.S. pork production supports an estimated 550,000 domestic jobs, approximately 110,000 of which are the direct result of exports. Pork exports now make an annual surplus contribution of nearly \$5 billion to the overall U.S. trade balance.

Around the world, however, numerous market access barriers exist that prevent pork exports from contributing even more to the domestic economy. The Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) negotiation presents an important opportunity to open new markets to U.S. pork in the Asia-Pacific region, to expand several existing markets, and to establish a standard for all future trade agreements involving pork. The participants in the TPP negotiations represent significant markets for increased U.S. pork exports with the successful removal of tariff and non-tariff barriers.

Currently, U.S. pork producers encounter highly restrictive trade barriers that slow the growth of U.S. exports into a number of TPP participant countries. Japan, for example, maintains a complex system of tariffs that reduces the price and quality advantages of U.S. pork. Vietnam, in addition to having burdensome administrative requirements, continues a reference price scheme on imported pork that raises the cost to import certain pork cuts above the market price. Furthermore, despite an existing bilateral trade agreement, Australia still uses non-tariff barriers to limit U.S. exports to either processed pork or frozen, boneless pork for further processing.

It is estimated that if all tariffs and non-tariff barriers are eliminated in each TPP nation, U.S. pork exports will grow by more than 50 percent within 10 years of implementation. We strongly urge you to insist that all tariffs and non-tariff barriers on pork in TPP partner nations be eliminated as part of the TPP agreement.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Joe Donnelly". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal line.A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Chuck Grassley". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Rebekah Peterson

Dir Durlin

Jany Baddi

Tom Wzi

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