



For Immediate Release

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BAUCUS HAILS DECISION TO HOST TRADE MINISTERS IN MONTANA

Trade Summit Will Bring Representatives of More Than 20 Countries to Big Sky

Washington, DC - Senate Finance Committee Chairman Max Baucus (D-Mont.) commended today's announcement by U.S. Trade Representative Ron Kirk that Big Sky, Montana will host the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) 2011 Trade Ministers meeting. Late last year, Baucus invited Ambassador Kirk to host the event in Montana. The APEC Trade Ministers meeting will bring cabinet-level trade representatives of 21 countries, along with hundreds of other officials, to Montana to discuss ways to deepen the Asia-Pacific trade and economic relationship.

"Montana represents the best of what America has to offer, and I am proud that APEC Trade Ministers will be able to see it first-hand," said Baucus. **"From our delicious beef to our hearty wheat and our bountiful natural resources, Montana's hard-working ranchers, farmers and other exporters produce world-class goods for the global market. Ambassador Kirk's decision to host APEC in Big Sky will highlight how important the quickly expanding Asia-Pacific markets are for Montana exporters. I fought hard to bring this event to Montana, and I will continue working hard to ensure this event is a success."**

APEC is a group of 21 Asia-Pacific member economies, including the United States, Canada, China, Japan, Korea, Hong Kong and Taiwan, that have joined together to facilitate economic growth, cooperation, trade and investment in the Asia-Pacific region. In 2008, Montana exported nearly \$400 million of merchandise to Asia alone. Montana's exports to Asia have grown over 320 percent since 2001. On December 2, 2009, Senator Baucus sent Ambassador Kirk and other Obama Administration officials a letter urging that the APEC 2011 Trade Ministers' meeting be held in Montana.

The full text of the letter appears below.

December 2, 2009

The Honorable Ron Kirk
U.S. Trade Representative
600 17th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20508

Dear Ambassador Kirk,

As the United States prepares to host the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit in 2011, I urge you to hold the APEC 2011 Trade Ministers' meeting in Montana.

As the Chairman of the Senate Finance Committee and the Senator from Montana, I appreciate the importance of APEC to America, and to Montana. I have long called on the United States to deepen its economic and strategic engagement with the APEC region. In recent months, I urged the Obama Administration to engage in the Trans-Pacific Strategic Economic Partnership Agreement (TPP), which I hope will be the building block of greater APEC integration. I strongly believe that closer economic engagement with APEC will help the United States achieve its goal of driving growth through exports.

Montana's farmers, ranchers, manufacturers, and service providers also understand how important APEC is to Montana's economy. Montana's five largest export partners are APEC economies, and Montana's exporters continue to see the potential of the Asia-Pacific region. From its golden wheat harvests, to its cattle ranches, to its growing manufacturing sector, Montana exemplifies the export potential of the United States. And Montana's workers represent the dedication and drive of workers throughout this great country.

Montana also has the resources and track record necessary to host the APEC 2011 Trade Ministers' meeting. In 2005 and 2006, we held successful negotiating rounds for the U.S. - Thailand and U.S. - Korea free trade agreements, respectively. Delegations from each of these countries were able to witness first-hand the vastness and diversity of our great state. Montana stretches 600 miles along America's northern border. It is a land of river-carved valleys surrounded by snow-capped peaks, a land of wide open plains dotted with small American towns, and a land of blazing sunsets fading into star-filled skies. Montana's natural beauty, national parks, and stunning mountains make it an ideal destination to show the APEC Trade Ministers a slice of the great American west.

I strongly urge you to consider this request, and look forward to hearing from you soon. I have sent identical letters to Secretary Geithner, Secretary Clinton, Secretary Locke, National Security Advisor Jones, and National Economic Council Director Summers.

Sincerely,

Max Baucus
United States Senator
Chairman of the Committee on Finance

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