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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6200

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March 30, 2020

The Honorable Robert E. Lighthizer
United States Trade Representative
600 17th Street N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20508

Dear Ambassador Lighthizer:

The Administration and Congress worked together successfully to renegotiate the North American Free Trade Agreement. Our good work resulted in passage of the United States – Mexico – Canada Agreement (USMCA) Implementation Act with broad bipartisan support. But the work is not yet finished, it has just entered a new phase. Before USMCA enters into force, the United States must have confidence that all three parties have fulfilled their respective obligations. A long experience of incomplete and inadequate implementation by trade agreement partners has taught us that the United States must do this work on the front end to ensure that the words on paper deliver genuine benefits to Americans, including our farmers, workers, and businesses. We urge you to seriously reconsider the proposed June 1 entry into force of USMCA, particularly in light of the significant public health crisis and supply chain disruptions caused by COVID-19.

The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted governments, businesses, workers, and farmers globally, leaving little, if any, time and resources to prepare for a smooth transition to USMCA. Even absent the pandemic, a June 1 deadline would be highly aggressive, and raises questions as to whether businesses have the information they need to adjust to the new rules and comply by that date. Entry into force should only happen after all necessary regulations are in place and our industries have had an opportunity to understand and implement them effectively. Just as important, the United States should not, and under both the Bipartisan Congressional Trade Priorities and Accountability Act of 2015 (TPA 2015) and the USMCA Implementation Act, cannot allow the agreement to enter into force before Canada and Mexico demonstrate full adherence to their commitments under USMCA.

USMCA should not enter into force prematurely – particularly in light of the COVID-19 pandemic – and thereby deny American farmers, workers, and businesses its intended benefits. We ask you to delay the proposed June 1 entry into force and work with Congress and

stakeholders to determine a more feasible timeline. We make this request with a strong desire to see USMCA succeed, and stand ready to work with you to ensure that is the case.

Sincerely,



Charles E. Grassley
Chairman
U.S. Senate Committee on Finance



Ron Wyden
Ranking Member
U.S. Senate Committee on Finance

Also signed by the following Members of the Senate Finance Committee:

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