

March 27, 2015

To: The Honorable Sherrod Brown
The Honorable Rob Portman
The Honorable Steve Chabot
The Honorable Brad Wenstrup
The Honorable Joyce Beatty
The Honorable Jim Jordan
The Honorable Bob Latta
The Honorable Bill Johnson
The Honorable Bob Gibbs
The Honorable John A. Boehner
The Honorable Marcy Kaptur
The Honorable Michael R. Turner
The Honorable Marcia L. Fudge
The Honorable Patrick J. Tiberi
The Honorable Tim Ryan
The Honorable Dave Joyce
The Honorable Steve Stivers
The Honorable James B. Renacci

Dear Ohio Delegation:

The undersigned organizations representing farmers, ranchers, processors and related industries of Ohio wish to express their strong support for introduction and passage of Trade Promotion Authority (TPA) at the earliest possible time. Our state food and agricultural sector, as with agriculture nationwide, is heavily dependent on continued strong growth in exports. Productivity in agriculture far outpaces the domestic market's ability to consume it. We need to continue to push for greater access to foreign markets and this is only possible through trade agreements and TPA.

As a result of trade agreements implemented since 1989, when the U.S. began using bilateral and regional trade agreements to open foreign markets to our goods, U.S. agricultural exports have nearly quadrupled in value and are now valued at a record \$152.5 billion (FY 2014). During that period, earnings from U.S. agricultural exports as a share of cash receipts to farmers have grown from 22% to 35%.

Farm and food exports have a positive multiplier effect throughout the U.S. economy and Ohio's. Every \$1 in U.S. farm exports stimulates an additional \$1.27 in business activity, according to USDA. Off-farm activities and services include purchases by farmers of fuel, fertilizer, seed and other inputs and post-production processing, packaging, storing, transporting and marketing the products we ship overseas. Exports of \$152.5 billion in FY 2014 therefore generated another \$194 billion in economic activity in the U.S. bringing the total economic benefit to the economy to \$347 billion.

This economic activity creates jobs. Every \$1 billion of U.S. agricultural exports requires the full-time work of approximately 6,600 Americans throughout the economy. Exports in FY 2014

therefore supported over one million full-time jobs, more than half of these have been created in the past ten years.

The multiplied benefits to our state's economy from exports are equally important. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, exports of agricultural products from Ohio totaled \$4.4 billion in 2013, up from \$1.5 billion in 2000. This means that \$5.6 billion in additional business activity was created in related and supporting sectors. It also means that 29,000 jobs were generated by this economic activity.

Trade agreements made these exports possible and each and every one of those agreements were themselves made possible by the enactment of trade promotion authority bills. Those bills gave U.S. negotiators the ability to extract the best deals possible from other countries. Without it, no country will be willing to make the toughest concessions to us – the ones that would most benefit us – if they fear that Congress will subsequently demand more. Trade agreements would break down without TPA.

On the other hand, rejecting TPA would not be free of serious consequences. Nations around the world are negotiating bilateral trade deals. If competitors gain free access to our biggest markets while we continue to face substantial import barriers, our markets will inevitably shrink. Standing still on trade is really falling behind. This would be a self-inflicted wound, no different in effect to an export embargo, which our producers will not tolerate. In short, trade agreements, such as those being negotiated with eleven other countries under the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) and with the European Union under the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP), cannot achieve U.S. goals without TPA.

In the TPP talks, the Administration is working hard to complete a high-standard, 21st century deal that will eliminate barriers to our exports and raise standards within the TPP nations. Should Congress not pass TPA, that would send a clear and unfortunate message to our TPP partners and to the world, that we are turning our back on the fastest growing economic region in the world. The economic cost to the United States and to Ohio from a failed TPP would be more than lost opportunities, it could result in a real loss of exports, market shares and jobs.

TPP is the most important regional trade negotiation ever undertaken. Both the United States and our partners in the TPP will be better off with a robust, high standard TPP than without it. But in order for TPP to become a reality, Congress needs to pass TPA. We strongly urge you to support Ohio's agricultural sector and vote for TPA.

Sincerely,

Ohio Agribusiness Association
Ohio Cattlemen's Association
Ohio Corn & Wheat Growers Association
Ohio Dairy Producers Association
Ohio Farm Bureau
Ohio Pork Council
Ohio Poultry Association
Ohio Soybean Association