

September 11, 2019

The Honorable Robert Lighthizer
United States Trade Representative
600 17th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20508

Dear Ambassador Lighthizer:

The undersigned business organizations welcome the news that the Administration is nearing an “early harvest” in trade negotiations with Japan that will provide U.S. farmers and ranchers with improved access to the Japanese market, reduce certain industrial tariffs, and establish new rules for digital trade. While this is a positive development, we respectfully urge the Administration to hold fast to its commitment to achieve a comprehensive, high-standard trade agreement with Japan and ensure this initial package does not impede momentum toward such a broader accord. American workers and companies in a wide range of sectors cannot afford to miss this opportunity to address the full range of U.S. trade concerns in a state-of-the-art, comprehensive trade agreement.

The breadth of the U.S. business community’s priorities in the U.S.-Japan trade negotiations are well known. Among the areas that should be addressed in a comprehensive trade agreement with Japan are market access and technical barriers to trade; services (including financial, telecommunications, audiovisual, express delivery, ICT, and other professional services); intellectual property, including patents, copyrights, trademarks, and trade secrets; customs administration and trade facilitation; investment; government procurement; regulatory cooperation and good regulatory practices; transparency and procedural fairness; state-owned and controlled enterprises; anti-corruption; small and medium-sized enterprises; and competition policy.

These priorities are reflected in comments submitted to the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative by our organizations late last year and in the negotiating objectives established by Congress in the Bipartisan Trade Priorities and Accountability Act of 2015 (known as Trade Promotion Authority). The United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) serves as a model in many respects.

Securing a comprehensive and ambitious agreement with Japan, the world’s third largest economy, is imperative to the interests of workers and companies in diverse industries and sectors of the U.S. economy. It is especially important because other major economies, including the EU, Canada, and Mexico, have recently entered into market-opening trade agreements with Japan. As a result, a broad array of industries in these countries already enjoy preferential access and treatment in the Japanese market. A comprehensive agreement would remedy the disadvantages now facing U.S. companies.

The United States and Japan have built a close strategic partnership, and our bilateral relationship demands an economic partnership that is equally exceptional. We appreciate your hard work in pursuit of this objective and stand ready to assist in any way.

Sincerely,

American Chemistry Council
American Council of Life Insurers
Biotechnology Innovation Organization
Business Roundtable
Coalition of Services Industries
Motion Picture Association of America
National Association of Manufacturers
National Foreign Trade Council
Personal Care Products Council
Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America (PhRMA)
Securities Industry and Financial Markets Association (SIFMA)
United States Council for International Business
U.S.-Japan Business Council
U.S. Chamber of Commerce

cc: Hon. Chuck Grassley, Chairman, Senate Committee on Finance
Hon. Ron Wyden, Ranking Member, Senate Committee on Finance
Hon. Richard Neal, Chairman, House Committee on Ways and Means
Hon. Kevin Brady, Ranking Member, House Committee on Ways and Means