

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

R. BRUCE JOSTEN
EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT
GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS

1615 H STREET, N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20062-2000
202/463-5310

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TO THE MEMBERS OF THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS:

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the world's largest business federation representing the interests of more than three million businesses of all sizes, sectors, and regions, as well as state and local chambers and industry associations, and dedicated to promoting, protecting, and defending America's free enterprise system, urges Congress to act now to resolve the trade dispute relating to the U.S. Country of Origin Labeling (COOL) rule for muscle cuts of meat. With today's final authorization by the World Trade Organization (WTO) of Canadian and Mexican retaliation against \$1 billion worth of U.S. exports—and clear statements by those two governments that they will apply this retaliation within days—it is imperative that Congress act now to save thousands of American jobs.

The Canadian and Mexican governments have indicated that the only way the United States may avoid retaliation is by passing legislation to repeal immediately the COOL rule for meat and comply with our country's international trade commitments. Because the United States has exhausted all appeals before the WTO, Canada and Mexico now have the “whip hand” in this dispute, and the United States has no effective alternative to repeal.

Specifically, Congress should include in the omnibus appropriations bill legislation repealing the COOL rule for meat (H.R. 2393) that was approved in June by the House of Representatives with the support of 300 Members of Congress. This legislation also enjoys strong support from the Senate and more than 140 organizations representing the vast majority of the U.S. business and agriculture communities.

The stakes are high: Canada and Mexico are by far the largest export markets of the United States. Trade with our two North American neighbors reaches \$1.3 trillion annually and supports nearly 14 million U.S. jobs. The COOL Reform Coalition (www.COOLreform.com), which is co-chaired by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and the National Association of Manufacturers, has created an interactive [map](#) showing the potential impact of retaliation for each state.

Given the blow it would deal to thousands of American jobs, the U.S. business and agriculture communities regard retaliation as intolerable even in the short term. Once retaliation is applied, it could take years for American farmers, ranchers, and companies to recover lost market share. For these reasons, the Chamber respectfully urges Congress to take the only course of action that will achieve these goals by repealing the COOL rule for meat in the omnibus appropriations bill.

Sincerely,



R. Bruce Josten