

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

R. BRUCE JOSTEN
EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT
GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS

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September 13, 2016

The Honorable K. Michael Conaway
Chairman
Committee on Agriculture
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Collin C. Peterson
Ranking Member
Committee on Agriculture
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Conaway and Ranking Member Peterson:

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, applauds you for holding a hearing on American agricultural trade with Cuba and writes in strong support of H.R. 3687, the "Cuba Agricultural Exports Act," which would repeal restrictions on financing for agricultural exports to Cuba.

Since the Trade Sanctions Reform and Export Enhancement Act (TSRA) was implemented in 2000, the United States has exported nearly \$5 billion worth of agricultural products to Cuba—creating jobs here in the United States. Recently, however, U.S. market share has declined due to increased competition, especially from countries able to provide export credits to the Cuban import authorities. For too long, the United States has penalized the American farmer by imposing unilateral sanctions on Cuba and other countries, thereby denying American farmers and ranchers significant opportunities to sell their products.

It is time for American policy to catch up with our values and common sense. The U.S. national interest cannot be served by throwing regulatory hurdles in the way of legal exports from American farms to Cuba.

The Chamber thanks you for holding a hearing on agricultural trade with Cuba and urges the Committee to consider and favorably report H.R. 3687, the "Cuba Agricultural Exports Act."

Sincerely,



R. Bruce Josten

cc: Members of the Committee on Agriculture