

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

October 1, 2010

President Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

We are writing to respectfully request immediate action to resolve the U.S.-Mexico Trucking Dispute that has resulted in retaliatory tariffs being imposed on U.S. cheese exports to Mexico. This is an issue of serious concern that is negatively impacting many New York dairy farmers and cheese manufacturers.

New York is the third largest dairy farm state and the fourth largest in milk producing state. The dairy producers in our state have been struggling since early 2009 to deal with a cost-price squeeze that has only recently begun to moderately improve. These farms are an integral part of New York's rural communities and support many jobs, both on the farm and in supporting sectors, including dairy product manufacturing.

As your advisory team is aware, cheeses were included in the revised trucking dispute retaliation list issued by Mexico in August of this year. Retaliatory tariffs of 20% to 25% are being imposed on several categories of cheese, which have together accounted for 80% of U.S. cheese exports to Mexico and approximately a fourth of total U.S. cheese exports world-wide. In addition to being the largest cheese export destination for the U.S. dairy industry, Mexico is also our largest overall dairy export market by far. Total U.S. dairy sales to Mexico have averaged almost \$800 million over the past two years – more than \$100 million of which are among our targeted cheese categories – making it a linchpin in the exports that help support U.S. milk prices.

We believe that it is absolutely achievable for the U.S. to resolve this transportation dispute with Mexico to alleviate the burden on New York's dairy community – while simultaneously ensuring that we maintain strong transportation safety standards on Mexican trucks and drivers while they are driving on our roads.

We ask you, Mr. President, to take action on behalf of New York's hardworking family dairy farmers, dairy plants and other related sectors by acting without delay to resolve this situation with Mexico so that the tariffs can be removed from our cheeses. As your Administration pursues the National Export Initiative, a move that we have applauded, maintaining our existing sales is critical to avoid backsliding.

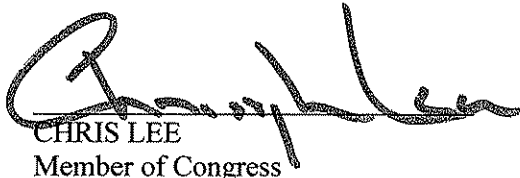
Sincerely,



BILL OWENS
Member of Congress



MICHAEL ARCURI
Member of Congress

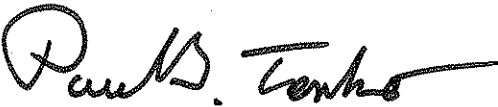


CHRIS LEE
Member of Congress



MAURICE HINCHEY
Member of Congress


SCOTT MURPHY
Member of Congress


PAUL TONKO
Member of Congress


LOUISE SLAUGHTER
Member of Congress

cc: U.S. Trade Representative Ron Kirk
U.S. Department of Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood
U.S. Department of Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack