

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

May 9, 2014

The Honorable Thomas J. Vilsack
Secretary of Agriculture
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue SW
Washington, DC 20250

The Honorable Michael Froman
U.S. Trade Representative
Executive Office of the President
600 17th Street NW
Washington, DC 20508

Dear Secretary Vilsack and Ambassador Froman:

We would like to thank you for your continued efforts to expand opportunities around the world for the U.S. dairy industry. Right now, dairy exports account for the equivalent of one day's milking every week. Foreign markets provide a critical home for milk produced by tens of thousands of U.S. dairy farms and an important growth avenue for food manufacturing facilities that process milk into finished products. This dynamic helps support good American jobs in rural areas all across the country.

As Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) negotiations move forward, we urge you to pursue an ambitious outcome on dairy trade, placing high priority on removing the various tariff and nontariff barriers that our dairy industry confronts when shipping to the European Union (EU).

Although both the U.S. and EU are major dairy producing and exporting regions, the U.S. has a \$1.3 billion trade deficit with the EU for dairy products because of the burdens that the EU imposes on American companies trying to export their products to the EU. On average, EU dairy tariffs are three times those of the U.S., and while the EU enjoys a country-specific tariff-rate quota for dairy access into the U.S. market, the U.S. has no such similar preferential access to EU countries. Furthermore, while U.S. certification requirements for the vast majority of EU dairy imports are relatively nominal, EU certificate requirements for dairy products are more extensive, impeding U.S. access into the EU market. Resolving these imbalances would allow U.S. dairy products to compete on a more level playing field with European companies.

Dairy farmers and companies in our districts are also deeply concerned by the EU's global efforts to impose restrictions on the use of many common food names under the guise of geographical indication regulations. The EU is taking a mechanism that was created to protect consumers against misleading information and instead using it to carve out exclusive market access for its own producers. The EU's abuse of GIs threatens U.S. sales and exports of a number of U.S. agricultural products, but pose a particular concern to the use of dairy terms. This type of barrier to trade and commerce defies the fundamental goals of a trade agreement, and we urge you to work aggressively against the EU's efforts in this respect in order to preserve both domestic and export opportunities for these products.

Trade discussions with the European Union offer a valuable opportunity to address the many barriers that hold back greater U.S. dairy sales to a market of 500 million consumers. We urge you to achieve a strong and beneficial outcome for the U.S. dairy industry in these trade negotiations.

Sincerely,



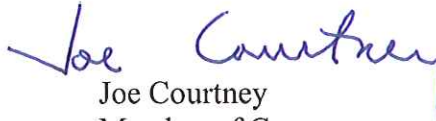
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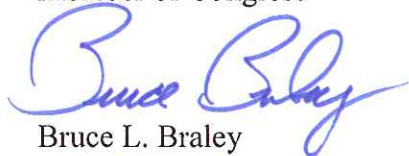
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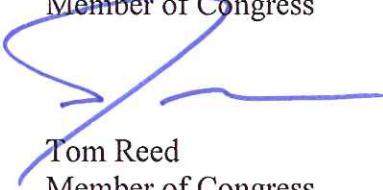
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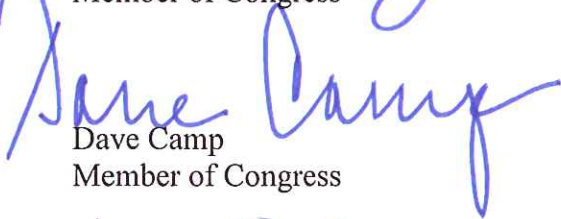
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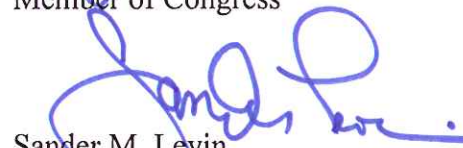
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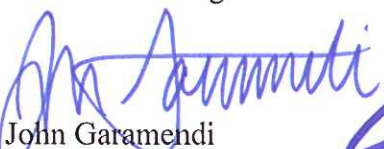

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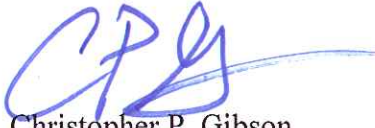

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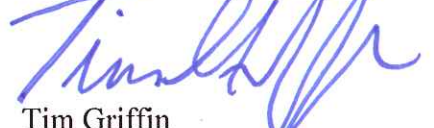

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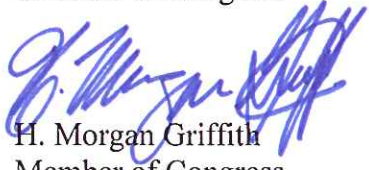

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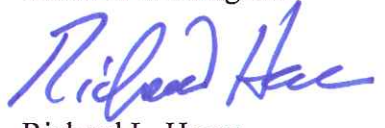

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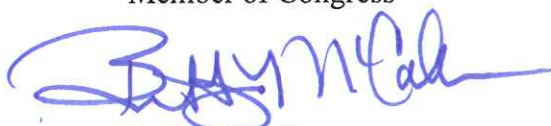
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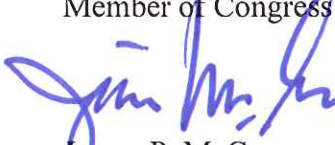
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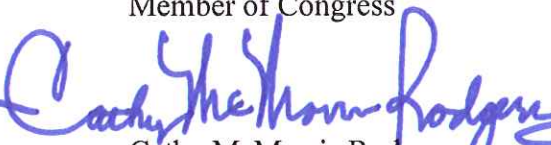
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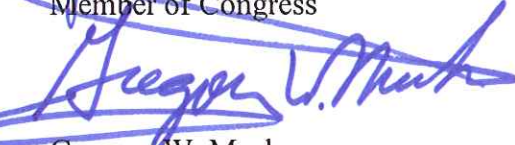
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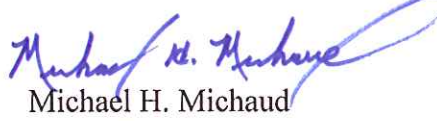
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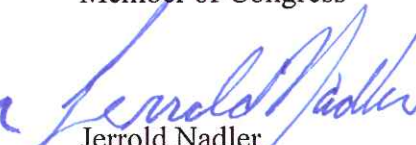
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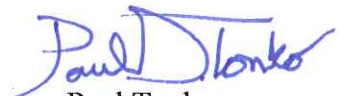
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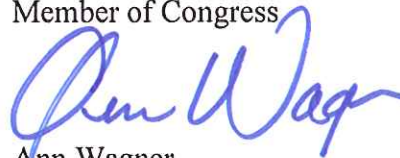
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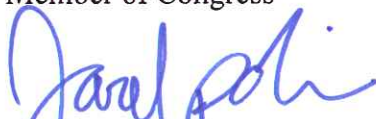

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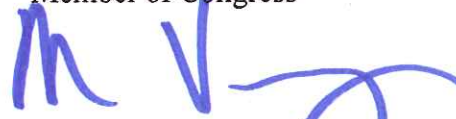

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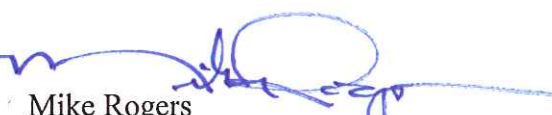

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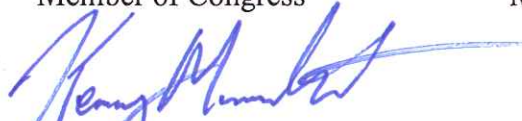

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