February 24, 2021

The Honorable Ron Wyden
Chairman
Senate Committee on Finance
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mike Crapo
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Finance
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Wyden and Ranking Member Crapo,

The Americans for Free Trade coalition, a broad alliance of American businesses, trade organizations and workers united against tariffs, respectfully writes in support of the nomination of Katherine Tai to become the next U.S. Trade Representative. We applaud the scheduling of Ms. Tai’s nomination hearing, to take place on February 25, and we urge her quick confirmation by the Senate.

Ms. Tai and the Biden Administration have promised a “worker-centric trade policy.” Our coalition proudly represents every part of the U.S. economy including manufacturing, farming and agribusinesses, retail, technology, services, natural gas and oil, importers, exporters, and other supply chain stakeholders. Collectively, we support tens of millions of American jobs through our vast supply chains.

American families, workers, and businesses face unprecedented difficulty and uncertainty from the ongoing economic harm caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. As American businesses try to implement and sustain a full and successful recovery, they need as much certainty as possible. That certainty can be provided in many ways, including by collaborating with our trading partners and allies to address violations of U.S. trade law and by negotiating trade agreements that open markets for—rather than trigger retaliation against—American exporters and the tens of millions of American workers who rely on export markets around the world.

Further, ensuring the United States has a cohesive and strategic policy to take on China’s unfair trading practices— but does not cause collateral damage to American families, workers, and businesses—is vital to easing existing financial pain and providing certainty that can help fuel a successful recovery. Over the last several years, American businesses and families have been assessed more than $85 billion in additional tariffs. Tariffs are taxes, and they have resulted in less money in the pockets of American families, a slowdown in U.S. manufacturing, and decreased competitiveness for American businesses vis-à-vis their counterparts in Europe and Asia.

2 See The Budget and Economic Outlook: 2020 to 2030, Congressional Budget Office, p. 33 (“As a result, tariffs are also projected to reduce average real household income by $1,277 (in 2019 dollars) in 2020.”).
However, the development of a comprehensive China strategy, the opening of markets to U.S. goods and services, the enforcement of U.S. trade agreements, and a meaningful review of the negative impact tariffs have had on American families, workers, and businesses – all of which will help provide certainty and support a successful U.S. economic recovery – cannot happen without a confirmed U.S. Trade Representative in place.

Ms. Tai is eminently qualified to craft a comprehensive, thoughtful, and strategic approach to U.S. trade policy that helps fuel a successful economic recovery for American families, workers, and businesses. We urge the Senate Finance Committee to advance Ms. Tai’s nomination expeditiously, and we urge the full Senate to vote on her confirmation without delay.

Sincerely,

Accessories Council
ACT | The App Association
Agriculture Transportation Coalition (AgTC)
ALMA, International (Association of Loudspeaker Manufacturing and Acoustics)
American Apparel & Footwear Association (AAFA)
American Association of Exporters and Importers (AAEI)
American Association of Port Authorities
American Bakers Association
American Bridal & Prom Industry Association (ABPIA)
American Chemistry Council
American Coatings Association, Inc. (ACA)
American Down and Feather Council
American Fly Fishing Trade Association
American Home Furnishings Alliance
American Lighting Association
American Petroleum Institute
American Pyrotechnics Association
American Rental Association
American Specialty Toy Retailing Association
American Wind Energy Association
Arizona Technology Council
Arkansas Grocers and Retail Merchants Association
Association For Creative Industries
Association for PRINT Technologies
Association of Equipment Manufacturers (AEM)
Association of Home Appliance Manufacturers
Auto Care Association
Beer Institute
BSA | The Software Alliance
California Retellers Association
Can Manufacturers Institute
Carolina Loggers Association
Chemical Industry Council of Delaware (CICD)
Coalition of New England Companies for Trade (CONECT)
Coalition of Services Industries (CSI)
Colorado Retail Council
Columbia River Customs Brokers and Forwarders Assn.
Computer & Communications Industry Association (CCIA)
Computing Technology Industry Association (CompTIA)
Consumer Brands Association
Consumer Technology Association
Council of Fashion Designers of America (CFDA)
CropLife America
Customs Brokers & Freight Forwarders Assn.
of Washington State
Customs Brokers & Freight Forwarders of Northern California
Distilled Spirits Council of the United States
Electronic Transactions Association
Experiential Designers and Producers Association
Fashion Accessories Shippers Association (FASA)
Fashion Jewelry & Accessories Trade Association
Flexible Packaging Association
Florida Ports Council
Florida Retail Federation
Footwear Distributors and Retailers of America (FDRA)
Fragrance Creators Association
Game Manufacturers Association
Gemini Shippers Association
Georgia Retailers
Global Chamber®
Global Cold Chain Alliance
Greeting Card Association
Halloween Industry Association
Home Fashion Products Association
Home Furnishings Association
Household and Commercial Products Association
Idaho Retailers Association
Illinois Retail Merchants Association
Independent Office Products & Furniture Dealers Association (IOPFDA)
Indiana Retail Council
Information Technology Industry Council (ITI)
International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (IAAPA)
International Bottled Water Association (IBWA)
International Foodservice Distributors Association
International Housewares Association
International Warehouse and Logistics Association
International Wood Products Association
Internet Association
Jeweler's Vigilance Committee
Juice Products Association (JPA)
Juvenile Products Manufacturers Association
Leather and Hide Council of America
Licensing Industry Merchandisers' Association
Los Angeles Customs Brokers and Freight Forwarders Assn.
Louisiana Retailers Association
Maine Grocers & Food Producers Association
Maine Lobster Dealers’ Association
Maritime Exchange for the Delaware River and Bay
Maryland Retailers Association
Methanol Institute
Michigan Chemistry Council
Michigan Retailers Association
Minnesota Retailers Association
Missouri Retailers Association
Motor & Equipment Manufacturers Association
Motorcycle Industry Council
NAPIM (National Association of Printing Ink Manufacturers)
National Association of Chemical Distributors (NACD)
National Association of Foreign-Trade Zones (NAFTZ)
National Association of Home Builders
National Association of Music Merchants
National Association of Printing Ink Manufacturers
National Association of Trailer Manufacturers (NATM)
National Confectioners Association
National Council of Chain Restaurants
National Customs Brokers and Freight Forwarders Association of America
National Fisheries Institute
National Foreign Trade Council
National Grocers Association
National Lumber and Building Material Dealers Association
National Marine Manufacturers Association
National Restaurant Association
National Retail Federation
National Ski & Snowboard Retailers Association
National Sporting Goods Association
New Jersey Retail Merchants Association
North American Association of Uniform Manufacturers and Distributors (NAUMD)
North Carolina Retail Merchants Association
Ohio Council of Retail Merchants
Outdoor Industry Association
Pacific Coast Council of Customs Brokers and Freight Forwarders Assns. Inc.
Pennsylvania Retailers' Association
PeopleforBikes
Personal Care Products Council
Pet Industry Joint Advisory Council
Petroleum Equipment & Services Association
Plumbing Manufacturers International
Power Tool Institute (PTI)
Promotional Products Association International
Recreational Off-Highway Vehicle Association
Retail Association of Maine
Retail Council of New York State
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CC: Senate Finance Committee Members