

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

May 2, 2017

The Honorable Wilbur Ross
Secretary
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20230

Dear Secretary Ross:

As you step into your role as our nation's Secretary of Commerce, we write to direct your attention to a trade enforcement challenge requiring swift action by your Department. While trade enforcement issues continue to be raised by this administration, to-date there has not been sufficient attention to the U.S.-Russia bilateral trade relationship. In a March 1st address to the Commerce Department, you pledged to implement policies that "put American workers first." We support this goal. That is why we urge immediate action to combat ongoing Russian practices that cost American jobs, violate international trade rules, and break commitments Russia made when it joined the World Trade Organization.

Today, the Russian Federation uses a range of illegal, unfair, and often opaque, trade and industrial policies that undermine America's manufacturers and agricultural producers with extensive barriers to the Russian market. For example, in 2014, the Russian Federation imposed a ban on U.S. poultry, fruit, vegetables, and dairy products in retaliation against Western sanctions condemning the unprovoked Russian invasion of Ukraine. Two years before the ban was put in place, U.S. agricultural exports to Russia surpassed \$1.6 billion. Last year, with access of U.S. producers to the Russian market decimated by Moscow's politically driven protectionist policies, U.S. agricultural exports to Russia were barely 15 percent of what was shipped in 2012. These barriers alone cost thousands of jobs for farmers, ranchers and workers across our country.

In the manufacturing sector, Russia continues to use massive subsidies to sustain failing industries, to undercut American exports with state-driven import substitution tactics, and uses Russian state-owned enterprises (SOEs) to promote Russian suppliers over American competitors. For example, in 2015, the Russian government claimed the authority to establish domestic procurement strategies for commercial state-owned

enterprises. Using this SOE procurement authority, Moscow has recently blocked SOEs with 50 percent or more government ownership from purchasing American automobiles, heavy machinery, and metal products. These policies prevent U.S. companies from competing for business in Russia and limit the expected benefit of Russia's accession to the WTO for American workers.

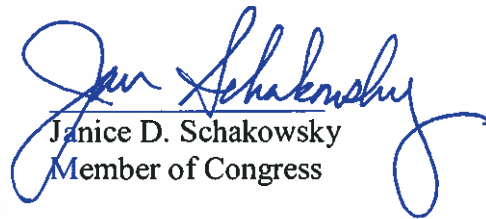
The 2016 U.S. Trade Representative's Report on the Implementation and Enforcement of Russia's World Trade Organization Commitments concluded that "Russia's actions continued to depart from the core tenants of the WTO – liberal trade, transparency, predictability– in favor of inward-looking, import substitution economic policies." These ongoing Russian departures from WTO norms are contributing to the loss of more than 40,000 jobs for American workers.

You have publicly cited the modern-day wisdom of the Benjamin Franklin inscription that is enshrined on our nation's Department of Commerce, that "commerce among nations must be fair and equitable." We look forward to working with you to ensure that the U.S.-Russian bilateral trade relationship is fair, equitable and in the best interest of America's workers. Russia's predatory and protectionist trade practices must not go unchallenged.

Sincerely,



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Member of Congress



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Member of Congress



Cheri Bustos
Member of Congress



Peter A. DeFazio
Member of Congress



Debbie Dingell
Member of Congress




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Brian Higgins
Member of Congress

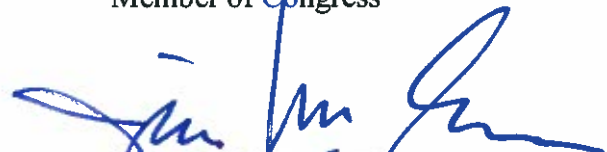

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Barbara Lee
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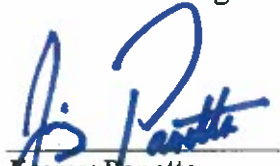

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