

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 19, 2011

The Honorable Ron Kirk
U.S. Trade Representative
600 17th Street NW
Washington, DC 20508

Dear Ambassador Kirk:

We write to you as new Members of the House of Representatives with proven experience creating jobs, manufacturing products, and providing services. To put our business backgrounds to use, we have recently formed a working group to propose and advance policy intended to spur job growth throughout our economy. Our experience bears out that expanding trade will support new jobs in many industries, but few sectors are as trade-dependent as agriculture, which drives commerce in many of our Congressional Districts.

As we work to recover from one of the worst recessions in our nation's history, we urge you to send implementing language to Congress on the pending free trade agreements (FTAs) with South Korea, Colombia, and Panama as quickly as possible. If they are fully implemented, these FTAs will represent nearly \$3 billion in new trade for American agricultural producers.

However, we are concerned that inaction on the pending FTAs will result in lost opportunities for American farmers and ranchers. Colombia will soon implement trade agreements with Canada and the European Union, while Argentina and Brazil already have critical access to the Colombian market. Similarly, South Korea is in the process of completing trade pacts with many of our agricultural competitors, including Chile, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, the European Union, and Mexico. At a time when unemployment still hovers around nine percent, we cannot afford to sacrifice significant access to these overseas markets.

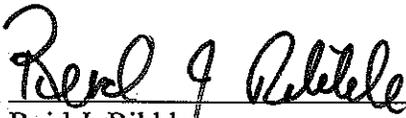
Should the U.S.-Korea Free Trade Agreement (KORUS FTA) be adopted in short order, increased farm exports to South Korea will likely surpass \$1.8 billion annually, a 46 percent increase over current levels. U.S. exports of wheat, corn, soybeans, cotton, fresh cherries, grape juice, and numerous other processed foods will receive immediate duty-free access under the FTA. Additionally, the U.S. dairy industry, which endured significant losses amidst the global economic downturn in 2009, will take in roughly \$380 million per year during the first few years of the FTA as a result of expanded market access for cheese, whey, skim milk powder, and other products. The KORUS FTA, if realized at its full potential, would result in the creation of thousands of new jobs in the agricultural and rural sectors of our economy.

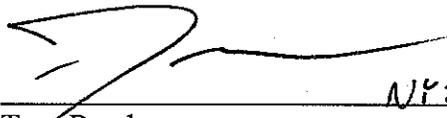
Likewise, implementation of the U.S.-Colombia Trade Promotion Agreement would enable over 80 percent of current U.S. exports to become duty-free upon enactment, including beef, cotton,

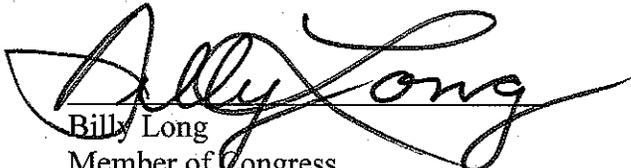
wheat, soybeans, apples, and cherries. Total export gains for American agriculture would likely exceed \$815 million per year upon full implementation. Similarly, the U.S.-Panama Trade Promotion Agreement would allow more than half of our current agricultural exports to become duty-free immediately upon implementation. Additional exports could total \$195 million as a result of the pact's approval. The two FTAs combined would likely yield between 6,000 and 8,000 new jobs as a result of this enhanced market access.

While you are undoubtedly familiar with these figures, we believe that they bear repeated emphasis in the current economic climate. Moreover, moving forward on these FTAs would support the President's stated goal of doubling U.S. exports by 2014. We know from our experience building businesses, in some cases in agriculture, that increasing trade nets new jobs across many sectors of our economy. We therefore support quick action on the FTAs with South Korea, Colombia, and Panama and we are hopeful that you will send us the implementing language for the pacts in very short order.

Sincerely,

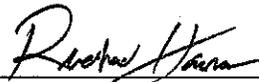

Reid J. Ribble
Member of Congress

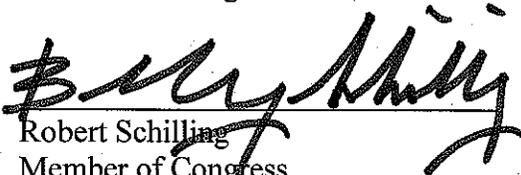

Tom Reed NY29
Member of Congress


Billy Long
Member of Congress


Vicky Hartzler
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Marlin Stutzman
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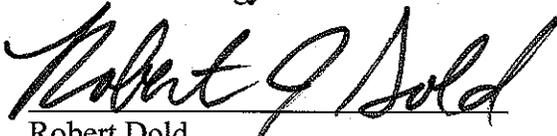

Richard Hanna
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