

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 1, 2019

Hon. Wilbur Ross
Secretary of Commerce
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Ave NW
Washington, D.C. 20230

Dear Secretary Ross:

We write to you today increasingly concerned over efforts from certain regional interests to curb the import of fresh tomatoes from Mexico. Erecting new barriers to trade in fruits and vegetables risks hurting American consumers and the United States agriculture industry. It also could jeopardize our trading relationship with one of the leading export destinations for American agriculture and affect the USMCA implementation process both here and in Mexico.

Maintaining a healthy two-way bilateral trade relationship with Mexico is essential to the continued growth of the American economy. It is also essential to ensure that U.S. consumers have access to affordable fresh produce, especially in cold-weather months. A recent study finds that tomato imports from Mexico are responsible for over 30,000 U.S. jobs and support a supply chain that generates nearly \$3 billion in U.S. GDP.¹

The U.S. is Mexico's top agricultural trade partner, with U.S. agriculture exports totaling \$18 billion and representing about 70% of Mexico's agri-food imports. The agriculture sector is

¹ <https://cals.arizona.edu/arec/sites/cals.arizona.edu/arec/files/publications/Tomato%20Contribution%20Brochure%202018.pdf>

vital to the overall two-way trade between our two countries and supports an estimated five million U.S. jobs.

It is for these reasons that we urge the Department of Commerce to continue renegotiation toward a mutually-agreed Tomato Suspension Agreement that addresses U.S. grower concerns. Terminating the agreement without the certainty provided by a revised suspension agreement would create economic uncertainty throughout the supply chain and risk retaliation to our agriculture industry.

We encourage the Administration to continue to craft agricultural trade policy that seeks to strengthen the industry nationally, not one that is calibrated around regional or seasonal interests. Therefore, we respectfully request that the Administration develop and maintain a workable suspension agreement on tomatoes from Mexico.

We appreciate your attention to this matter and look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signatures in blue ink. On the left is the signature of David Schweikert, and on the right is the signature of Martha McSally.

David Schweikert
Member of Congress

Martha McSally
Senator

Handwritten signatures in blue ink. On the left is the signature of Ann Kirkpatrick, and on the right is the signature of Kyrsten Sinema.

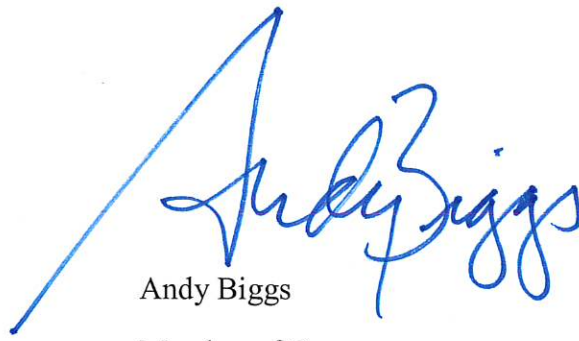
Ann Kirkpatrick
Member of Congress

Kyrsten Sinema
Senator



Raúl M. Grijalva

Member of Congress



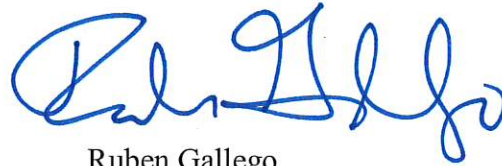
Andy Biggs

Member of Congress



Tom O'Halleran

Member of Congress



Ruben Gallego

Member of Congress



Greg Stanton

Member of Congress