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Congress of the United States House of Representatives

May 27, 2010

The Honorable Barack Obama
President of the United States
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, Northwest
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Obama,

Following your May 19th meeting with Mexico's President Felipe Calderon, I am writing today to request an update on the progress your Administration has made on resolving the cross-border trucking program with Mexico. As you know, this dispute has resulted in more than 14 months of damaging tariffs on 90 U.S. products.

Mexico is the number one market for Washington state potatoes and pears and a top market for cherries, and our growers and processors have lost tens of millions of dollars since the tariffs were imposed. These tariffs were a contributing factor to two hundred and fifty people in the town of Prosser, Washington losing their jobs this month, and our potato growers are quickly losing their market share in Mexico to Canada – a move that will likely be permanent. This trend will only continue to worsen the longer these tariffs remain in place.

At a time when our economy is already struggling, these tariffs have caused significant harm to farmers and manufacturers nationwide through no fault of their own. I have repeatedly heard from members of your cabinet that your Administration is finalizing a proposal to resolve this dispute with Mexico, and yet no information or details have been provided.

I am hopeful that you were able to make significant progress on this issue during your recent meeting with President Calderon, and respectfully request an update on your efforts. I stand ready to work with you to resolve this dispute in a way that keeps our roadways safe while upholding our trade obligations to our largest trading partner.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Doc Hastings', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Doc Hastings
Member of Congress