

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510
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<http://www.senate.gov>

July 12, 2022

Doug McKalip
Senior Advisor, Office of the Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear Mr. McKalip:

Congratulations on your nomination to be the chief agricultural negotiator at the Office of the United States Trade Representative. We applaud your many years of service to our nation, and are pleased that President Biden has finally chosen to acknowledge America's agricultural sector in trade.

As you know, America's farmers and ranchers depend on stable and growing trade relationships around the world for the livelihood of their families and the welfare of all Americans. About one-fifth of all agricultural production in the U.S. is sold overseas, representing vital sales that bolster our nation's export economy, support thousands of domestic jobs, and make a positive contribution to our nation's trade balance. Our nation's ability to feed not only ourselves, but other nations as well, is a critical tool to advance U.S. food and security interests globally.

It is therefore disappointing that not only has the Biden administration chosen to forego the pursuit of trade agreements of any kind which can provide enhanced market access for U.S. exporters, but in the case of U.S. dairy, the administration has failed to fully enforce existing trade agreements. President Biden's decision to put the U.S. agricultural industry on the backburner of his trade agenda disadvantages American farmers and ranchers while jeopardizing America's strategic interests in the face of an emboldened and increasingly assertive China.

As you may know, China is working to become party to two regional trade agreements in the Asia-Pacific, while the United States is party to none. Although we support greater engagement and look forward to more details concerning the administration's Indo-Pacific Economic Framework (IPEF), the lack of meaningful and substantive economic initiatives lead us to believe that the Biden White House is ceding influence to the Chinese Communist Party. More concrete and lasting action that bolsters America's economic leadership is needed so that China's malign and self-serving role in regional trade does not become the global trend.

In light of these concerns, if confirmed, we request your commitment to working to enforce, enhance and grow market access as part of trade negotiations in order to promote U.S. agricultural exports which will be critical to achieving much-needed economic recovery.

Further, if confirmed, we ask that you become an advocate within the Office of the United States Trade Representative for the prioritization and inclusion of market access commitments as part of U.S. trade discussions. Our farmers and ranchers are facing uncertain times due to the immense pressure of an exponential increase in input costs. Greater access to international markets for products we export would help alleviate some of that pressure.

Initiating conversations about trade agreements, refreshing old agreements and opening new avenues of trade will help our producers at home and assist the U.S. effort to remain a strong competitor to China.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. We look forward to engaging with you as you progress through this confirmation process.

Sincerely,



Tim Scott
U.S. Senator



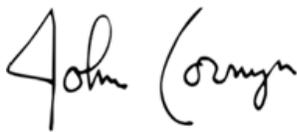
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