



June 11, 2015

Dear Member of Congress:

On Friday, the House is scheduled to vote on *the Trade Act of 2015* (the Senate Amendment to H.R. 1314), legislation enacting Trade Promotion Authority (TPA) that is essential for the completion of several trade agreements currently being negotiated. On behalf of the Food Marketing Institute (FMI) and the 35,000 grocery stores and supermarkets operated by our members, I urge you to support *the Trade Act of 2015* when it comes to the House floor.

The wholesale and retail food industry depends upon free and fair trade to provide consumers with a year-round supply of wholesome, safe and affordable food. Previous trade agreements have expanded access to products that may have a limited annual production cycle or - in some cases - may not even be produced in the United States. This has not only benefited American consumers, who now have access to the safest, most diverse food choices in the world, it has also helped to create jobs throughout the entire supply chain.

However, as this supply chain has become more international and integrated, it has also become more complex. Thoughtful, carefully negotiated trade agreements can help cut through this complexity by establishing a rules-based system that creates both certainty and a level playing field. The Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) and the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP), two agreements currently being negotiated with our trading partners in Asia and Europe, are addressing issues vital to our industry such as food safety, market access, international investment, and ending discriminatory regulations. Without completed trade agreements in place, these issues could take years of missed business opportunities and squandered economic growth to settle. TPA is essential to moving the negotiating process forward and needs to be enacted.

TPP and TTIP are still being negotiated and likely will be for quite a while; there is much work that needs to be done and many issues that still remain unresolved. *The Trade Act of 2015* allows these talks to move forward while preserving Congress' role as an equal partner in this process. I urge you to support this legislation when the House votes on Friday.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Hatcher
Senior Vice President, Government and Public Affairs
Food Marketing Institute