



April 28, 2009

United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator:

On behalf of the family farmers and ranchers of National Farmers Union (NFU), I write in support of the Trade Reform, Accountability, Development and Employment (TRADE) Act of 2009 and urge you to join Senator Sherrod Brown as an original cosponsor of this important legislation. The TRADE Act provides a much needed new roadmap for U.S. trade policy.

NFU supports fair trade policies that allow agricultural producers to compete on a level playing field. The TRADE Act articulates the need for U.S. trade policy reform and defines a plan for how America can achieve a policy that promotes fair trade.

Our current trade agenda does not prioritize the best interests of America's family farmers and ranchers and has consistently used agriculture as a bargaining chip for other sectors of the U.S. economy to achieve an agreement. The failed free trade agenda has opened our markets to cheap, often low-quality food products, damaged our trade balance and encouraged a "race to the bottom" to see who can produce the cheapest food and fiber, regardless of how it is produced. Our competitors do not have to meet the same high labor, environmental, and health and safety standards as U.S. producers—all factors that significantly impact the cost of production. America's farmers and ranchers produce the safest, most affordable and most abundant food supply in the world but our ability to do so is being undercut by the current free trade agenda.

The TRADE Act takes positive steps to improve U.S. trade policy by outlining fair trade agreements should achieve and provides a detailed inventory of the provisions that should be included in future agreements. This legislation would also require a review to address the failures of existing trade agreements before any new agreements are considered or negotiated. Further, the bill proposes a plan to replace the flawed Fast-Track trade negotiating rules and restore Congress's constitutional authority to set the terms of trade.

Again, I urge you to contact Senator Brown's office (Chris Slevin/[chris\\_slevin@brown.senate.gov](mailto:chris_slevin@brown.senate.gov)) to be an original cosponsor of this legislation and move it quickly through the legislative process.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Roger Johnson", written in a cursive style.

Roger Johnson, President  
National Farmers Union