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October 31, 2019

U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the members of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), I write to urge Congress to not bring legislation to approve the U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) to the House floor for a vote until the underlying agreement includes stronger language to improve workers' lives. Any agreement must include strong labor and environmental standards with effective enforcement mechanisms, as well as the elimination of policies that would lock in high pharmaceutical prices.

AFSCME appreciates the hard work that the Working Group appointed by House Speaker Pelosi has undertaken to address these necessary improvements. We also believe that they will continue to work in the right direction to ensure that the agreement includes provisions that will improve working conditions and rights for all workers. The Working Group, however, should not be rushed to meet an arbitrary deadline if the language is not correct.

With members in communities across the nation serving in hundreds of different occupations—from nurses to corrections officers, child care providers to sanitation workers—AFSCME members provide the vital services that make America happen. Our members understand that an increase of outsourced U.S. jobs or the elimination of U.S. jobs will reduce revenue that supports the essential public services performed by our members and the need for the services that our members provide. Any agreement must have strong enforceable standards and protections.

We are also concerned with current agreement language that provides pharmaceutical companies a guarantee of at least 10 years of marketing exclusivity protection and an array of mechanisms that allow drug companies to extend monopoly protections. This will hinder generic competition needed to bring down prices. Increased drug prices as a result of the current language will affect our members' employer-sponsored health insurance and jeopardize other benefits. At a time when millions of Americans and their families are suffering from high drug costs, there is no excuse for the inclusion of this corporate giveaway to the pharmaceutical industry.

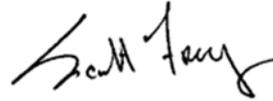
**American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, AFL-CIO**

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Again, we oppose consideration of a new NAFTA until the U.S., Mexico and Canada renegotiate currently weak provisions in a way that will truly level the current imbalance on labor rights and standards and will help reduce drug prices.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Scott Frey". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial 'S'.

Scott Frey  
Director of Federal Government Affairs

SF/HB:cg