

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
THE UNITED STATES TRADE REPRESENTATIVE
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20508

April 1, 2010

Dear Members and Friends of the Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce,

On the occasion of your 84th year celebrating Annual World Trade Week, I wish to extend my congratulations and a warm welcome to Chair Kaylynn Kim and the membership of the Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce. The companies represented here today are the backbone of the local economy, and the goods and services that you sell to customers around the world support the jobs in California communities that people depend upon. According to the Los Angeles Economic Development Corporation, international trade directly accounts for 342,000 jobs in Southern California.

I'd like to urge you today to join us in a nationwide initiative to expand exports even further and help fuel America's economic recovery. In these difficult economic times, America cannot afford to leave any jobs on the table.

In his State of the Union address, President Obama announced a National Export Initiative and has appointed an Export Promotion Cabinet to support export-oriented economic growth. The National Export Initiative brings together the Office of the United States Trade Representative, the Commerce Department, the Small Business Administration, the Export-Import Bank, and other federal agencies to help more Americans succeed through trade, with the goal of supporting two million additional American jobs through a doubling of American exports.

In particular, we can create jobs across California and America by helping more small- and medium-businesses to expand their potential in markets around the world. These smaller businesses have generated almost two thirds of all new employment in the last 15 years. But today, only one in every 100 small businesses is marketing its products abroad. We need to find ways to help the other 99 support jobs in the U.S. by taking their manufacturing and services businesses global.

The role of the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative in the National Export Initiative is reflective of our role as an agency - to tear down barriers to trade through market openings and enforcement, and open up new opportunities for American businesses to grow. Every day, we are working diligently to increase access to markets abroad for California and U.S. businesses and workers, in order to create and sustain good jobs.

We are working to deliver the economic and strategic trade benefits offered by the Panama, Colombia, and Korea, Free Trade Agreements. For a year now, we have been working to address outstanding issues with those deals in order to move them forward when the time is right.

We are working to achieve a balanced and ambitious conclusion to the Doha Round that promotes meaningful market access for all nations and enhances economic development among the world's poorest nations.

And we are beginning negotiations toward a new Trans-Pacific Partnership that will expand U.S. opportunities in the Pacific under a high-standard, 21st century agreement that accesses tomorrow's most promising markets – even as we work to strengthen the key relationships of today, like those with Canada, Mexico, and the European Union.

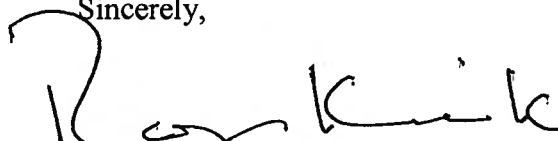
Over the last year, USTR has used every enforcement tool on the books – from negotiation all the way to dispute settlement – to guarantee that Americans receive the trade benefits they were promised in existing agreements.

In short, USTR is working all around the world to seize the biggest opportunities and tackle the biggest challenges in trade in ways that bring jobs and prosperity to the Americans we serve.

I welcome you all to join us in the National Export Initiative and to follow our progress at www.ustr.gov. You can sign up for our free weekly email newsletter at the bottom of the home page in order to stay on top of the latest developments and trade opportunities.

Thank you for sustaining the tradition and the vision of World Trade Week. I am excited about the Los Angeles Area Chamber's entrepreneurs, innovators, and creative and dynamic employees, and I look forward to working with you on building a better economic future for our country through trade.

Sincerely,



Ambassador Ron Kirk