THE UNITED STATES CONFERENCE OF MAYORS

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CEO and Executive Director
TOM COCHRAN

May 12, 2015

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate

The Honorable Harry Reid
Democratic Leader
United States Senate

Dear Leaders McConnell and Reid:

On behalf of The U.S. Conference of Mayors, we the undersigned mayors urge the Senate to adopt Trade Promotion Authority legislation (TPA 2015) that establishes high standard objectives for future trade deals, such as the Trans Pacific Partnership, currently being negotiated by the Administration. The U.S. Conference of Mayors adopted policy at its 82nd Annual Conference June 2014 in Dallas, TX, calling for Trade Promotion Authority and supporting the Administration's efforts to pursue high standard 21st century trade agreements that create jobs, increase exports and compete in a highly competitive globalized economy in the Pacific Rim and Europe.

We believe that inclusion of enforceable labor and environmental standards, transparency, uniform tariffs, protection of intellectual property rights, and other standards and objectives will result in increased global trade that promotes fairness throughout the global trading system, and therefore increase U.S. competitiveness. TPA is a critical step to ensuring that the United States and its metro economies remain leaders in the global market place, while providing appropriate consultation with Congress. Every President since FDR, regardless of political party, has had some form of trade negotiating authority, with the exception of Richard Nixon. Under TPA 2015, Congress and the public will have ample time to review the merits of any deal before a trade agreement is signed.

Our own forecasts, through IHS Global Insight, show that U.S. city/metro economies will continue to account for over 90% of the nation's Gross Domestic Product, and 92% of its future economic growth-- one-third of which will come from expanding exports. In 2014 the nation reached its highest export level of $2.35 trillion. Every $1 billion of increased exports creates 5,000 higher paying jobs. Ninety-eight percent of U.S. companies that export have under 500 employees, and promoting export growth among existing small and medium-sized employers is fast becoming an important local economic development strategy for job creation. With 95% of the world's consumers living outside of the United States, our growth depends on reaching these consumers who want to buy our products, but in a system of fair trade rules that includes enforceable labor and environmental standards.

In a world of increasing uncertainty, we also note the critical geopolitical arguments for the U.S. remaining a strong economic and trade partner in important parts of the world, as opposed to ceding such influence to others.

For these reasons, we urge the Senate to pass Trade Promotion Authority (TPA 2015).

Sincerely,

Kevin Johnson
Mayor of Sacramento, CA
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Stephanie Rawlings-Blake
Mayor of Baltimore, MD
Vice President

Tom Cochran
CEO and Executive Director

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Pedro Segarra, Mayor of Hartford, CT
Mark Shepherd, Mayor of Clearfield, UT
Raymond Stephanson, Mayor of Everett, WA
Marilyn Strickland, Mayor of Tacoma, WA
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