

COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

WASHINGTON, DC 20515

February 6, 2020

The Honorable Richard Neal
Chairman
Committee on Ways & Means
1102 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Earl Blumenauer
Chairman, Subcommittee on Trade
Committee on Ways & Means
1102 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Neal and Chairman Blumenauer:

Thank you for convening the hearing today about trade infrastructure for global competitiveness. We look forward to working with you to ensure America has the necessary infrastructure to allow our farmers and manufacturers to compete and win in the global marketplace. We write to highlight several principles that will be our focus in today's hearing and into the future.

First, there is bipartisan agreement on the need to improve our nation's infrastructure to maintain American competitiveness internationally. Effective infrastructure allows American businesses to do what they do best—succeed globally by moving goods, services, and people efficiently.

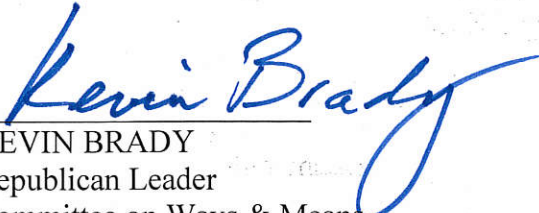
Second, burdensome regulations and permitting requirements as well as ineffective and inefficient procedures at the border add needless costs and delays to infrastructure projects and cause our country to fall behind our foreign competitors, including China. Cutting red tape allows each dollar we spend on infrastructure to go further. We must work intelligently to leverage each dollar spent on infrastructure as effectively as possible to compete globally. We were proud to lead on the Trade Facilitation and Trade Enforcement Act (TFTEA) of 2015, which authorized effective and proven tools such as public-private partnerships, trusted trader programs, enhanced technology for Customs enforcement, and other trade facilitation measures to help maximize the effectiveness of government resources.

Third, our trade agreements such as USMCA force our trading partners to cut red tape through customs and trade facilitation provisions, allowing our companies to compete as burdensome inefficiencies are eliminated at foreign borders. USMCA and other trade agreements include strong wins for U.S. exporters in terms of market access, and smart customs and trade facilitation provisions help ensure that the United States sees the expected benefits.

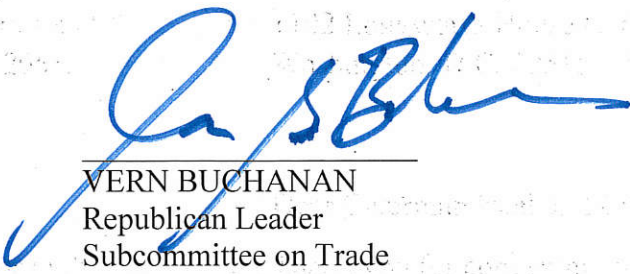
Fourth, continuing to build on the strength of our economy is vital to U.S. interests. While an effective and modern infrastructure is one aspect of competitiveness, we must also continue to focus on pro-growth policies. Republican priorities on trade, tax, and regulatory reform have fostered a booming economy that benefits America and our standing internationally.

We look forward to discussing these important issues with the witnesses today and working on a bipartisan basis to develop rational and effective solutions to upgrade our national's trade-related infrastructure so that Americans can continue to compete and win in markets throughout the world.

Sincerely,



KEVIN BRADY
Republican Leader
Committee on Ways & Means



VERN BUCHANAN
Republican Leader
Subcommittee on Trade
Committee on Ways & Means