

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

December 5, 2019

The Honorable Robert E. Lighthizer  
U.S. Trade Representative  
600 17th Street, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20508

Dear Ambassador Lighthizer:

As you consider how to move forward on the U.S. Mexico Canada Agreement (USMCA), we urge the administration to support robust U.S. technical assistance for trade capacity building through the U.S. Department of Labor and the U.S. Agency for International Development. As you know, Mexico enacted an important new labor law – ensuring Mexican workers’ rights to organize and to enter into collective bargaining agreements and creating a new system of labor courts. Mexico must now digitize and review hundreds of thousands of labor agreements, train judges and other professionals, and ensure that Mexican workers know their rights and that Mexican companies comply with the new law. We also need to help Mexico bolster its capacity to combat child and forced labor given increased pressure from Central American migration and to ensure that other core labor rights are robustly protected. Mexico has asked for international assistance and the United States can be a good partner for both the Mexican government and civil society.

Trade capacity building is key to strengthening enforcement of labor rights – an essential element of the USMCA. Furthermore, the United States must also have the requisite resources to monitor and enforce the labor obligations in the USMCA in order to protect workers throughout North America. Whether it be through capacity building support or monitoring and enforcement mechanisms, we need to make clear that the United States is committed to supporting Mexico's labor reform process.

Thank you for your continued efforts to support an improved framework for trade between the United States, Canada, and Mexico.

Sincerely,



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Maria Cantwell  
United States Senator



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Suzan K. DelBene  
Member of Congress