

**U.S. Senator Maria Cantwell**  
**Senate Finance Committee USMCA Markup**  
**January 7, 2020**

CANTWELL: Thank you Mr. Chairman. The state of Washington is one of the most trade-dependent economies in our country, and we certainly believe in opening new markets. And this agreement—while I could focus today on wheat, dairy, and the digital aspects, or the need to have better enforcement on aerospace—I want to spend my time talking about the 240 million dollars we’re going to spend on ensuring that Mexico has capacity building protections. That is, for rights to organize and bargain collectively. I want to thank my colleagues Senators Brown and Wyden for helping to implement these provisions on enforcement. But I also want to recognize that the twin sister of enforcement, is capacity building.

Why do I believe that we need to focus on capacity building? When we passed the Customs Bill for Trade Promotion Authority, we created a 30 million dollar enforcement trust fund. That trust fund has been used to bolster agriculture and our economy by being used to stop illegal logging in South America, to send the Chinese a warning about tariffs and quotas on wheat and to get that changed, and to fight European subsidies for commercial aircraft. The capacity that we put into the Customs Bill has helped us make trade work. The same thing is clear here. If we want to make trade work in countries that don’t really understand how to make it work successfully, we can demand all we want, but the United States of America has to be a willing partner in building capacity.

So why do I think this is so important? Well it’s a roadmap for where we need to go. This is the first time that I know of where business and labor—companies like Coca-Cola and the AFL-CIO—are in agreement about how to make the rules of the road. They are saying specifically, “we believe in the United States of America helping these countries build the judicial system, the labor enforcement system, the protection against child labor violations, and all the things that are so important to make a good trading partner.”

This is far cry from building a wall. So in a lot of ways, this bill is a lot more Trumka than it is Trump. And this is the point I want to make this morning: if our country wants to recognize the growing middle class around the world, the huge economic opportunity that the tipping point has occurred—there are more middle class people than poor people now in the global economy—it’s trillions of dollars in economic activity.

So let’s build relationships, let’s build enforcement, let’s build capacity, and let’s get on with what my state already knows—that trade is a great economic opportunity for our future economy.