

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

May 17, 2021

The Honorable Katherine Tai
United States Trade Representative
600 17th St. NW
Washington, DC 20508

Dear Ambassador Tai,

Congratulations on your unanimous Senate confirmation as U.S. Trade Representative. We look forward to working with you in advancing an ambitious trade policy that prioritizes American jobs and economic growth.

We are also writing to express our shared concern over reports of sharp increases in the cost of lumber. Fortunately, construction has remained an essential activity through the coronavirus crisis. However, this has resulted in an increased demand for lumber and shortages nationwide. Consequently, lumber prices have skyrocketed more than 300% since last spring.

This increase in lumber demand and cost has significantly and directly affected the housing market. In December 2020, the Federal Housing Finance Agency (FHFA) announced that, despite the severe pandemic-induced economic downturn, its index of house prices had risen 10.2 percent over the course of a year, and 1.5 percent in just the single month of October – which marks an 18 percent annualized increase.

Our economy struggles when businesses feel uncertainty in the market. With the economy stressed, as a result of the coronavirus pandemic, the US government should make every effort to help create certainty and predictability in our supply chains.

The 2021 Trade Policy Agenda acknowledges that “strong trade enforcement is essential to making sure our trading partners live up to their commitments and that U.S. trade policy benefits American workers, manufacturers, farmers, businesses, families, and communities.”

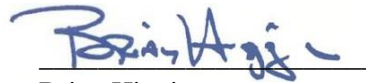
At present, the United States and Canada lack an agreement governing the trade of softwood lumber. Efforts to resolve this issue before the World Trade Organization (WTO) have stalled. The result is unnecessary cost increases to industries that use softwood lumber, such as residential home construction. We now call upon you to represent American interests on this critical issue by pursuing a balanced agreement with Canada. We, as Members of Congress, stand ready to discuss this issue and potential solutions with you. We consider such a balanced agreement to be in the interest of the United States because it would provide predictability for lumber producers and homebuilders so they can continue to help the economy recover from the events of the past year.

Thank you for your attention to this urgent matter and for considering our request.

Sincerely,



Kevin Hern
Member of Congress



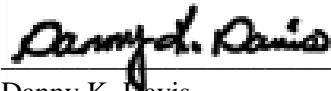
Brian Higgins
Member of Congress



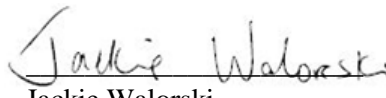
Devin Nunes
Member of Congress



Adrian Smith
Member of Congress



Danny K. Davis
Member of Congress



Jackie Walorski
Member of Congress



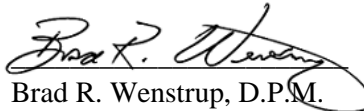
Ron Kind
Member of Congress



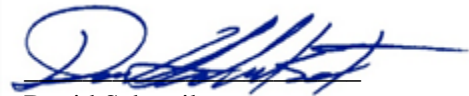
Steven Horsford
Member of Congress



Darin LaHood
Member of Congress



Brad R. Wenstrup, D.P.M.
Member of Congress



David Schweikert
Member of Congress



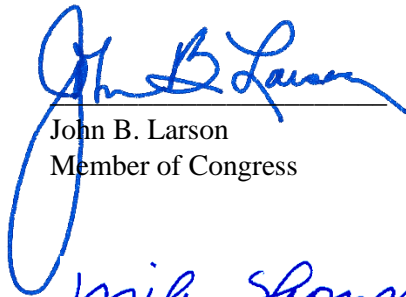
Jimmy Panetta
Member of Congress



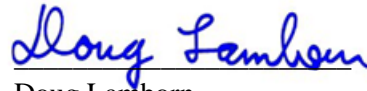
Vern Buchanan
Member of Congress



Bradley S. Schneider
Member of Congress



John B. Larson
Member of Congress



Doug Lamborn
Member of Congress



Mike Thompson
Member of Congress



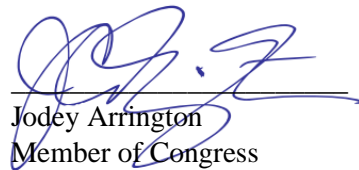
Mike Kelly
Member of Congress



Lloyd Smucker
Member of Congress



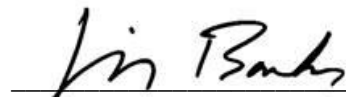
Tom Reed
Member of Congress



Jodey Arrington
Member of Congress



Daniel T. Kildee
Member of Congress



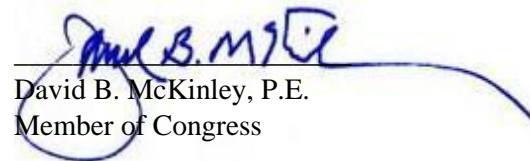
Jim Banks
Member of Congress



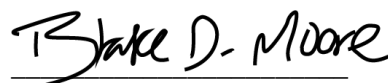
Bill Pascrell, Jr.
Member of Congress



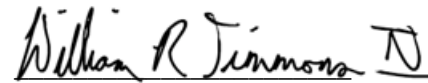
Rick W. Allen
Member of Congress



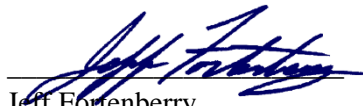
David B. McKinley, P.E.
Member of Congress



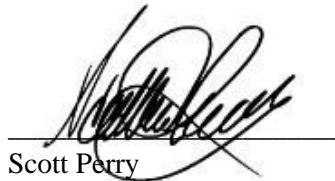
Blake Moore
Member of Congress



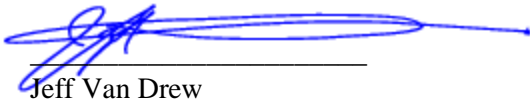
William R. Timmons, IV
Member of Congress



Jeff Fortenberry
Member of Congress



Scott Perry
Member of Congress



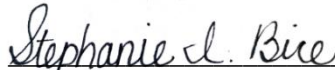
Jeff Van Drew
Member of Congress



Roger Williams
Member of Congress



Debbie Lesko
Member of Congress



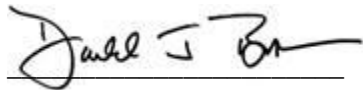
Stephanie Bice
Member of Congress



Anthony Gonzalez
Member of Congress



David Kustoff
Member of Congress



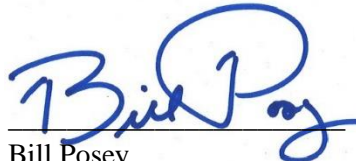
Donald J. Bacon
Member of Congress



David G. Valadao
Member of Congress



Glenn Grothman
Member of Congress



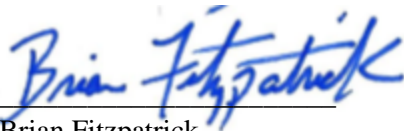
Bill Posey
Member of Congress



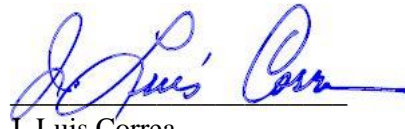
Ken Calvert
Member of Congress



Joe Courtney
Member of Congress



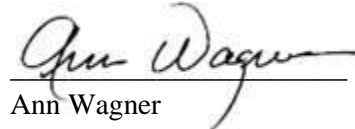
Brian Fitzpatrick
Member of Congress



J. Luis Correa
Member of Congress

_____/s/_____


Ed Perlmutter
Member of Congress



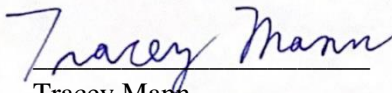
Ann Wagner
Member of Congress



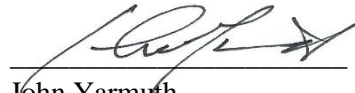
Burgess Owens
Member of Congress



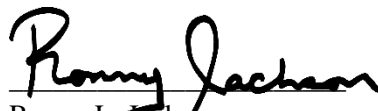
Ben Cline
Member of Congress



Tracey Mann
Member of Congress



John Yarmuth
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Ronny L. Jackson
Member of Congress




Josh Gottheimer
Member of Congress



Scott Franklin
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Scott H. Peters
Member of Congress




Jim Costa
Member of Congress



Louis Gohmert
Member of Congress


Cindy Axne

Member of Congress


Michelle Fischbach

Member of Congress



Chip Roy
Member of Congress


Ed Case

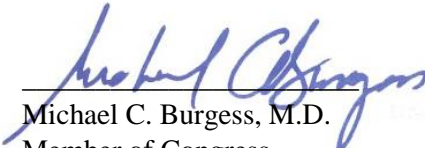
Member of Congress



Chris Stewart
Member of Congress



W. Gregory Steube
Member of Congress



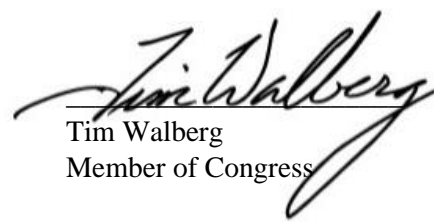
Michael C. Burgess, M.D.
Member of Congress


Brett Guthrie


Member of Congress



Greg Pence
Member of Congress



Tim Walberg
Member of Congress



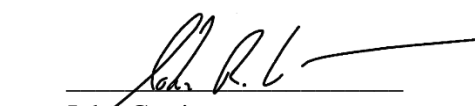
Mike Gallagher
Member of Congress


Ashley Hinson

Member of Congress


Ralph Norman

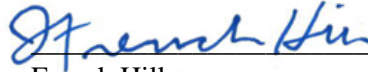
Member of Congress



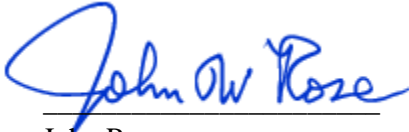
John Curtis
Member of Congress



Young Kim
Member of Congress



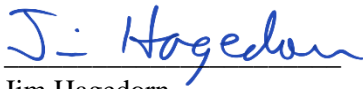
French Hill
Member of Congress



John Rose
Member of Congress



Chris Jacobs
Member of Congress



Jim Hagedorn
Member of Congress



Steve Womack
Member of Congress



Mark Green, M.D.
Member of Congress



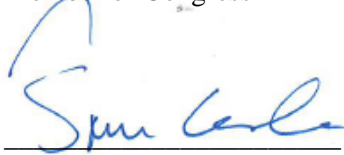
Jim Baird
Member of Congress



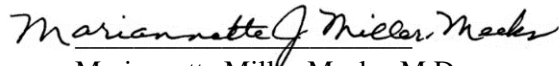
Randy Feenstra
Member of Congress



Ken Buck
Member of Congress



Tom Cole
Member of Congress



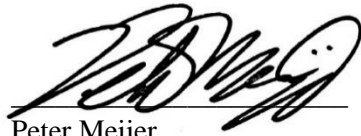
Mariannette Miller-Meeks, M.D.
Member of Congress



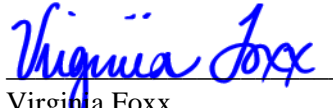
Beth Van Duyne
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Steve Chabot
Member of Congress



Peter Meijer
Member of Congress



Virginia Foxx
Member of Congress



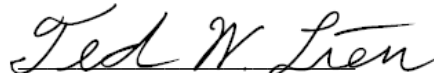
Warren Davidson
Member of Congress



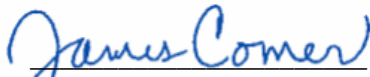
Tony Cardenas
Member of Congress



Dina Titus
Member of Congress



Ted W. Lieu
Member of Congress



James Comer
Member of Congress



Andy Barr
Member of Congress



Jake LaTurner
Member of Congress



Tom Emmer
Member of Congress



Michael Cloud
Member of Congress

Cc: The Honorable Gina Raimondo, Secretary of
Commerce



Sharice L. Davids
Member of Congress