



U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Friday, March 9, 2018

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Representatives Send Bipartisan Letter to President Urging Against NAFTA Withdrawal

WASHINGTON— Today, Representatives Henry Cuellar (TX-28), Filemon Vela (TX-34), Dan Newhouse (WA-04), Vicente Gonzalez (TX-15), Eddie Bernice Johnson (TX-30), Kevin Cramer (ND-01), and Terri Sewell (AL-07) sent a bipartisan letter to President Trump urging that he work to update and modernize – not withdraw the U.S. from - NAFTA. The letter describes the benefits NAFTA has conferred on the American economy and warns of the consequences withdrawal would have.

Members have consistently urged that the administration abide by the doctrine of “do no harm,” which means not hurting the relationships we have built with our neighbors who work with us on a daily basis to promote trade and border security.

However, the three NAFTA partner countries recently concluded the seventh round of renegotiations, and they are showing no signs of arriving at an agreement. In addition to this lack of progress, President Trump discussed the possibility of withdrawal on the campaign trail, and he has most recently imposed tariffs on steel, aluminum, and solar panel products, none of which bodes well for free trade advocates.

“My colleagues and I fully understand the critical importance of NAFTA for our districts,” said Congressman Cuellar. “Regional trade has increased over the treaty’s first two decades, from roughly \$290 billion in 1993 to over \$1.1 trillion in 2016. While withdrawal would be disastrous for the hundreds of thousands of employees and businesses that rely on the agreement, a 21st century update for this deal is the best outcome for American jobs and our economy. I hope to work in a bipartisan way with my colleagues and the administration to update – not withdraw from – the agreement.”

“NAFTA plays a central role in the economy of Texas and of the Rio Grande Valley. Mexico is Texas’ largest export market, receiving about forty percent of Texas’ total exports,” said Rep. Vela. “As negotiations on NAFTA continue, the Administration must not lose sight of the value of NAFTA for the state of Texas as a whole and of the detrimental impact that a withdrawal would have on the Texas economy.”

“Because trade supports 40 percent of jobs in Washington state, the importance of effective trade partnerships like NAFTA goes beyond partisanship,” said Rep. Newhouse. “Trading partners who play by the rules provide markets to sell American-made manufactured and agriculture goods. I support modernizing NAFTA in a way that preserves this important relationship that benefits jobs and businesses in Washington state.”

“NAFTA has fortified deep-seated connections between our three countries and spurred growth and economic development in South Texas and across the country,” Congressman Gonzalez said. “Today, I join my colleagues in echoing the calls of our constituents and encouraging the administration not to squander this opportunity for modernization, but rather to embrace it.”

For more information, please see the attached letter [here](#).

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