

United States Senate

January 17, 2020

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Honorable Robert E. Lighthizer
United States Trade Representative
607 17th Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20508

Dear Ambassador Lighthizer,

I am extremely disappointed that you have promised my Colleagues in the Southeast a plan that masquerades as fairness for U.S. farmers but instead raises the specter of future trade conflicts that will harm businesses in my state.

I took you at word your previous commitment to keep the "seasonality" produce provision out of the USMCA, because this provision would unduly impact jobs and economic development in my state.

However, on behalf of my constituents, American-based firms who import and distribute fresh produce from Mexico, I am concerned by your Jan. 9 letter to Southeast Congressmen, in which you pledge to create a plan that would consider data from biased sources that could result in trade remedies that harm my constituents. In the area of fresh produce, institutions and state agencies in Florida and Georgia have a documented history of presenting false data and economic arguments to usher in misguided policies.

As you move forward with your plan, I expect your analysis to give full consideration to the full range of data, including studies from research institutions outside the Southeast, including the University of Arizona.

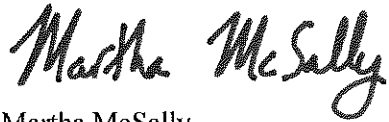
As you may be aware, importation of Mexican fruits and vegetables is an important driver of economic activity in my state, as well as the whole nation. For instance, the University of Arizona showed that imports of Mexican tomatoes resulted in U.S. GDP of nearly \$3 billion, and up to 33,000 jobs nationwide. Source: <https://cals.arizona.edu/arec/mexican-fresh-tomatoes-economic-impact-study-arecs-economic-impact-analysis-team>

Furthermore, given the fact that you have had continued meetings with my Colleagues in the Southeast on the topic of seasonal produce trade remedies, I am extremely disheartened by your previous promise to keep seasonality out of USMCA. I demand the opportunity to be briefed on your plan concurrently as you brief our Congressional colleagues in the Southeastern states.

Additionally, I expect that your office will engage meaningfully with our constituents, who are major employers in their communities, including the Fresh Produce Association of the Americas. I expect for your office to engage with state agencies, including the Arizona Commerce Authority and Arizona-Mexico Commission.

Given all the above, I am concerned that the actions described in your letter represent a way to sidestep the issue and install policies that amount to seasonal produce. This is unacceptable to me and my constituents.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Martha McSally". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Martha McSally
U.S. Senator