

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

May 26, 2017

The Honorable Wilbur Ross
Secretary
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20230

Dear Secretary Ross:

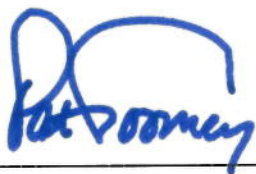
We write today about the ongoing negotiations with Mexico regarding the antidumping and countervailing duty cases against Mexican sugar imports. As Senators who represent states with a large presence of food and beverage manufacturers, we are concerned that any trade renegotiation will increase sugar prices in the United States and hurt American consumers. It is essential that the U.S. and Mexican governments forego additional trade restrictions or price controls on sugar that would ultimately raise prices for American families and threaten U.S. jobs in the food manufacturing industry.

As you know, the suspension agreements between the United States and Mexico impose a price floor on imported sugar that is significantly higher than the guaranteed price for domestic sugar. While this policy benefits U.S. sugar growers and refiners, it harms American consumers, who are forced to pay higher prices at the grocery store. U.S. sugar prices are already nearly double world prices, and ongoing import quotas and mandatory price floors further erode Americans' purchasing power. It is imperative that any trade agreement must ease the current price restrictions on Mexican sugar imports and provide financial relief for American consumers who lose out under this protectionist policy.

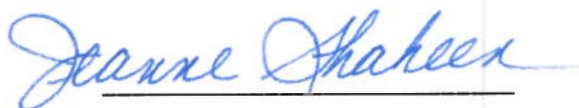
Until now, domestic sugar growers have exerted excessive influence on the trade negotiations at the expense of manufacturers who depend upon sugar for their products and all Americans who consume these products. Because domestic growers and refiners do not produce enough sugar to meet the demands of U.S. consumers, imports are necessary so that American-owned businesses can remain competitive in the global market. The sugar-using industry employs more than 600,000 workers across the United States. These well-paying American jobs would be jeopardized by any further restrictions on sugar imports, which only advance the narrow interests of domestic growers and large sugar companies.

As negotiations continue, we encourage you to improve upon the current suspension agreements with the goal of advancing trade and fair competition rather than restricting commerce and increasing prices. We are hopeful that you will pursue a trade policy that takes into account the interests of American consumers and all impacted businesses.

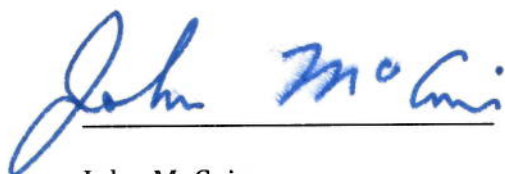
Sincerely,



Pat Toomey
U.S. Senator



Jeanne Shaheen
U.S. Senator



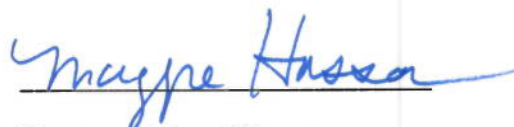
John McCain
U.S. Senator



Robert P. Casey, Jr.
U.S. Senator



Rob Portman
U.S. Senator



Margaret Wood Hassan
U.S. Senator



Michael S. Lee
U.S. Senator



Christopher A. Coons
U.S. Senator



Richard J. Durbin
U.S. Senator



Mark R. Warner
U.S. Senator