

## Words from Washington: Congress on the Importance of Trade Enforcement and Opening Foreign Markets to U.S. Businesses and Workers

**During the Senate Finance Committee hearing on the nomination of Katherine Tai as U.S. Trade Representative on February 25, 2021, several members of Congress touted the importance of robust trade enforcement and suggested that it should play an important role in the Biden administration's trade agenda.**

“Put plainly, the United States does not just lose potential opportunities when its leaders fail to engage appropriately on trade. Our businesses and workers lose ground here at home, in every state. This is why the United States needs an effective USTR to tear down trade barriers and confront abusive trade practices.”

– **SEN. MIKE CRAPO (R-ID) [00:09:37]**

“America's trade policy needs to be smarter and stronger.”

– **SEN. RON WYDEN (D-OR), [00:01:35]**

“The United States needs a full blockade against other countries' discriminatory policies aimed at knifing our industries with taxes where America leads, such as digital goods and services.”

– **SEN. RON WYDEN (D-OR), [00:04:09]**

“Trade done right is about strong enforcement that protects American workers and business and creates new opportunities to raise wages and increase exports. It raises the bar for labor and environmental standards and digital rules around the world so the global economy competes on our terms.”

– **SEN. RON WYDEN (D-OR), [00:05:05]**

“Free trade does not just strengthen the powerful, it empowers all Americans, including those running and working in smaller businesses.”

– **SEN. MIKE CRAPO (R-ID) [00:07:49]**

“Our market is already one of the most open in the world. Our problem is not about whether to open our market further, it is in fact that too many foreign markets remain closed to us. History demonstrates repeatedly that Americans do very well in foreign markets, if only given the chance — the chance to participate in an environment of fair trade.”

– **SEN. MIKE CRAPO (R-ID) [00:07:49]**

“I also look forward to working with [Ambassador-designate Tai] to extend Trade Promotion Authority to recognize, formalize our partnership and goals. In this way we can negotiate trade agreements that prioritize Americans and our workers. I am certain that the Ambassador-designate Tai will take her enforcement mission very seriously and she knows first-hand that trade agreements are worthwhile only if they are both enforceable and enforced.”

– **REP. KEVIN BRADY (R-TX) [00:20:08]**

“Our enforcement mechanisms built into our trade agreements give [Ambassador-designate Tai] the tools she needs to hold our trading partners to account. I know she will insist the countries abide by their obligations. Whether it's making sure China complies with its obligations in the Phase One agreement, addressing blatant revenue grabs of various trading partners through the use of digital services taxes, or challenging Mexican and Canadian practices that violate USMCA, I am confident she will not only be watching but acting.”

– **REP. KEVIN BRADY (R-TX) [00:20:48]**

“There is one issue that all of us in this room agree upon: enforcement, enforcement, enforcement of these trade agreements.”

– **REP. RICHARD NEAL (D-MA) [00:16:26]**

“America’s innovative industries are second to none. From creative content, to digital commerce, to pharmaceutical research, America’s innovators are what are getting us through the pandemic and what will get us out of it.”

– **SEN. MIKE CRAPO (R-ID) [00:40:01]**

“We need markets, but we also need a level playing field, and your work on trade enforcement and creating that level playing field is very important.”

– **SEN. DEBBIE STABENOW (D-MI) [00:42:36]**

“I so appreciate all your incredible work and leadership in this area [USMCA] in terms of enforcement. I’m glad to see that as of last December, Canada is now working to uphold its dairy market access commitment. So that first enforcement action was brought, which I thought was positive.”

– **SEN. DEBBIE STABENOW (D-MI) [00:47:00]**

“Last year, the United States took the first ever U.S.–Mexico–Canada Agreement enforcement action on Canada’s dairy tariff rate quota. The announcement showed that our government is going to be working real-hard that our dairy farmers and processes realize additional markets access — that was a big thing in the agreement, so we want it carried out.”

– **SEN. CHUCK GRASSLEY (R-IA) [00:48:16]**

“One of the [USMCA] improvements that I’m most excited about are the new environmental monitoring enforcement tools and resources, some of which my office worked with you to develop, including the new NAFTA implementing legislation.”

– **SEN. TOM CARPER (D-DE) [00:57:25]**

“I’m hoping that [Ambassador-designate Tai] and the Biden administration are going to embrace a new trade regime. And while I mentioned to you, I’m all for enforcement, I’m all for capacity building, I’ve spent many, many hours of my time getting those into aspects of the USMCA and other agreements, we cannot just be about those aspects. We have to be for opening up new markets.”

– **SEN. MARIA CANTWELL (D-WA) [01:07:00]**

“One of the most important things, including in the competition with China, is that innovation and R&D have to be a central part of our response... it’s critical for manufacturers in my state that USTR advance and defend strong intellectual property rules in our trade agreements and in global fora like the World Trade Organization.”

– **SEN. BOB MENENDEZ (D-NJ) [01:15:33]**

“Expanding [agriculture] market access is critical and so equally important is the proper enforcement of the trade agreements that we already have.”

– **SEN. JOHN THUNE (R-SD) [01:27:59]**

“In those [trade]...treaties, with Mexico, for example, Central America, we have certain labor standards and environmental standards we expect them to adhere to and [that] we enforce. China does not enforce those. And with that lack of enforcement, it turns out to be an expense, an avoided expense, to further subsidize somebody moving from Mexico or Guatemala, moving their factory to China.”

– **SEN. BILL CASSIDY (R-LA) [01:47:27]**

“I’m also delighted that your introducers described you as somebody who’d be all about enforcement, enforcement, and enforcement. I hope that’s true. I’ve been in Congress 14 years and enforcement has never been an adequate priority in my view, ever. So, I hope when you’re done improving enforcement, you then improve enforcement, and then you improve enforcement again.”

– **SEN. SHELDON WHITEHOUSE (D-RI) [02:32:46]**