

November 11, 2016

To the Senators and Representatives of the Georgia Congressional Delegation:

On behalf of farmers and other members of the food and agriculture industry of Georgia, we express our support for the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP). We are thankful for the engagement and support of Congress throughout the negotiation process and ask that you continue this engagement. If faithfully implemented, TPP will help level the playing field for U.S. exports and create new opportunities for us in the highly competitive Asia-Pacific region.

The TPP is critical to the livelihood of the U.S. food and agriculture sector because it will create conditions that encourage economic growth and increased employment in rural areas and throughout the supply chain. Exports are fundamental to the success of the agricultural industry because 95 percent of the world's consumers live outside of the United States and 20 percent of U.S. farm income is from exports. In Georgia, 23,500 jobs are supported by agricultural exports that total \$3.1 billion annually. USDA estimates that every \$1 billion of U.S. agricultural exports in 2014 provided approximately 7,550 American jobs throughout the economy. According to USDA, U.S. food and agricultural exports reached a record \$150 billion in 2014, supporting 1,132,000 full-time civilian jobs, which included 808,000 jobs in the non-farm sector. The agricultural export surplus helped to offset some of the non-agricultural trade deficit. According to the American Farm Bureau Federation, TPP will boost annual net farm income in the United States by \$4.4 billion, including an increase in Georgia's cash receipts by \$198.3 million.

The overall TPP agreement successfully tears down many tariff and non-tariff trade barriers that currently hinder U.S. competitiveness and prevent us from meeting consumer demand for high-quality U.S. food and agricultural products throughout the Asia-Pacific region. TPP will allow us to be more competitive in the rapidly growing Asia-Pacific market.

TPP will not only remove barriers for our exports to 11 key Asia-Pacific countries, but will also provide much needed leverage on future market access opportunities in potential TPP members such as Taiwan, the Philippines and Indonesia. Furthermore, TPP provides high-standard trade rules, allowing the United States to lead in establishing market-driven and science-based terms of trade that will directly benefit the U.S. food and agriculture industry in our efforts to compete and thrive in this important economic region. If we do not lead, we will simply fall behind as our competitors aggressively work to establish alternative trade agreements that place their agricultural interests at an advantage. According to the Peterson Institute for International Economics, "Delaying the launch of TPP by even a year would represent a \$94 billion permanent loss, or opportunity cost, to the U.S. economy." With net farm income at its lowest level since 2002, the costs of inaction are too high for us to ignore.

The TPP presents a valuable opportunity for U.S. agriculture; one that we cannot afford to miss. TPP is important for the future of rural Georgia, and we urge your support of TPP.

Sincerely,

Georgia Agribusiness Council
Georgia Cattlemen's Association
Georgia Cotton Commission
Georgia Farm Bureau
Georgia Fruit and Vegetable Growers Association
Georgia Milk Producers
Georgia Peanut Commission
Georgia Pecan Growers Association
Georgia Poultry Federation
Metro Atlanta Chamber of Commerce