

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

September 20, 2019

The Honorable Robert Lighthizer
U.S. Trade Representative
Office of the U.S. Trade Representative
600 17th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20508

Dear Ambassador Lighthizer:

We write to you about ongoing negotiations between the Office of the United States Trade Representative (USTR) and the Government of India. As you continue discussions with Prime Minister Modi's Administration to reach a trade deal and potentially reinstate India's Generalized System of Preference Status (GSP), we would like to stress the importance of removing the existing barriers to the export of U.S. agriculture products, specifically pecans.

Pecan prices have faced negative pressure due to rising imports from Mexico, Chinese tariffs, and Hurricane Michael's impact on tree loss and 2018 crop production. Gaining access to new markets for pecans will help stabilize the pecan markets while orchards are replanted and a trade deal is negotiated with China.

The growing middle class in India has demonstrated its desire for consumer-oriented agricultural products, like tree nuts, and the Indian market represents one of the most dynamic and fastest growing in the world. Unfortunately, the current disparity in the tariffs India charges on different varieties of tree nuts has created an unlevel playing field for American producers. The current tariff on U.S. pecans entering India is approximately 36%, while the tariff for similar products, such as pistachios and almonds, is only 10%. Lowering the tariff on pecans would satisfy the demand of the Indian people for additional varieties of tree nuts without impacting India's virtually nonexistent domestic pecan industry.

The pecan industry contributes over \$3.57 billion to the economies of the 15 pecan producing states. Over the last 10 years, exports alone have pumped an additional \$1.25 billion in economic activity into rural America. Reducing trade barriers into India is an opportunity to strengthen the economy of rural America.

Thank you for your work to expand access for American agricultural products around the world.

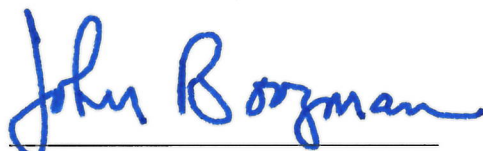
Sincerely,



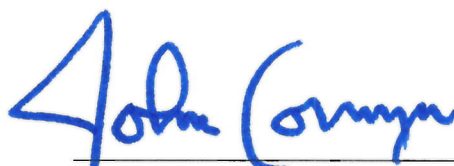
David A. Perdue
United States Senator



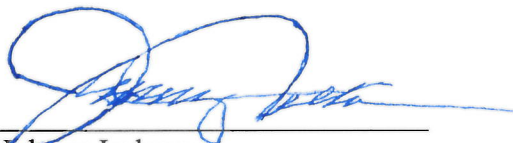
Doug Jones
United States Senator



John Boozman
United States Senator



John Cornyn
United States Senator



Johnny Isakson
United States Senator



Martin Heinrich
United States Senator



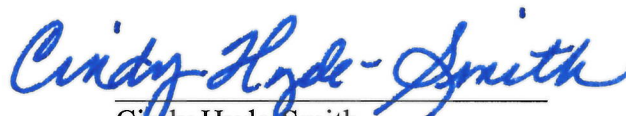
Tom Udall
United States Senator



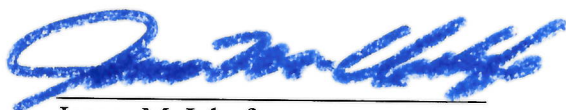
Ted Cruz
United States Senator



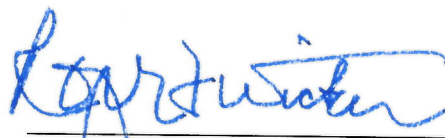
Tom Cotton
United States Senator



Cindy Hyde-Smith
United States Senator



James M. Inhofe
United States Senator



Roger F. Wicker
United States Senator