



February 12, 2015

The Honorable John Boehner
Speaker of the
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Democratic Leader
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Harry Reid
Democratic Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Orrin Hatch
Chairman
Committee on Finance
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Ron Wyden
Ranking Member
Committee on Finance
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Paul Ryan
Chairman
Committee on Ways and Means
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Sander Levin
Ranking Member
Committee on Ways and Means
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Bipartisan Leaders, Chairmen, and Ranking Members,

The technology sector drives growth, spurs productivity, and provides millions of jobs for American workers. Our associations represent hundreds of U.S. technology companies – a broad range including hardware, software, services, and Internet companies – that rely on international trade to sell their goods and services to the 95% of world’s population outside of the U.S. Whether it’s our member companies’ employees, their suppliers, or their customers – trade helps support jobs and grow our economy.

Our products and services connect people, consumers, businesses, and governments in ways that were not possible a decade ago, and the trade agreements currently being negotiated represent a tremendous opportunity to open new markets for our industry and set the rules for the 21st century digital economy. However, in order for America’s most cutting-edge companies to continue innovating, we need to ensure any trade agreements will allow those companies to compete on a level playing field. To do that, we need the countries involved in trade negotiations to come forward with their best offers. This can only happen if we, the United States, come to the negotiating table as one voice.

Trade Promotion Authority (TPA) gives the U.S. one voice on trade. TPA empowers Congress to set the Administration's negotiating objectives for trade agreements. It also provides an assurance to our negotiating partners that Congress has already set the parameters for what the United States views as a successful trade package. In short: TPA strengthens our country's negotiating position and provides our negotiating partners the confidence they need to give us their best offers – resulting in the strongest possible agreements for American businesses and workers.

When it comes to writing the rules for the future, we cannot be idle. The global economy is quickly and inevitably moving forward, so we cannot let our trade priorities and our economy remain in the 20th century. We need a gold standard framework for global trade that is reflective of today's digital economy and the growing importance of the technology and Internet sectors. The first step for accomplishing this is to pass an updated TPA bill that recognizes the realities of the 21st century economy and provides guidance to negotiators on achieving this modern trade framework. The second step is to evaluate each trade deal on its individual merits and whether it reflects America's trade priorities. We urge Congress to swiftly pass updated TPA legislation to support the almost 40 million American jobs supported by trade and ensure that our trade policy is ready for the 21st century.

Sincerely,

BSA | The Software Alliance
Computer and Communications Industry Association
Consumer Electronics Association
Information Technology Industry Council
The Internet Association
Semiconductor Industry Association
Silicon Valley Leadership Group
TechNet

cc: United States Congress