

I support free trade because I am a believer in the power of free markets to efficiently direct our limited resources, spur innovation and investment, and improve our standard of living. As one of the nation's richest agricultural regions, Northern California benefits from the increased exports and job creation that are directly associated with trade. These local jobs are on and off the farm, including transportation workers, processors, packers, and sales and marketing workers. Additionally, Northern California small businesses from other sectors of the economy also benefit from expanded export opportunities, while families and businesses across our nation save thousands of dollars each year from lower-cost imported goods made possible by trade.

With 95 percent of the world's consumers living outside the U.S. and 87 percent of the world economic growth over the next 5 years expected to occur beyond our borders, trade will continue to provide American companies with an incredible potential to increase exports, grow, expand, and create jobs here at home. To stay competitive in the global economy, we should be doing everything we can to remove foreign barriers to U.S. goods and services and to level the playing field for American farmers, ranchers, manufacturers, and service providers. Congress took a significant step in the right direction last year by approving trade agreements with Colombia, Panama, and South Korea. Yet our foreign competitors are not standing still. We must continue to actively pursue trade agreements with other nations so that American agricultural produce, manufactured goods, and services have greater access into new and growing markets across the globe.

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