

September 7, 2012

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

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

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Minority Leader  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

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

Dear Speaker Boehner, Majority Leader Reid, Minority Leader Pelosi, and Minority Leader McConnell:

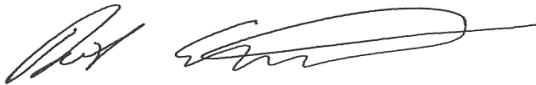
We are writing to urge you to work together to pass the Russia Permanent Normal Trade Relations (PNTR) legislation in the House and Senate in September. This legislation, which is the top trade priority for the business community this year, is needed to give U.S. manufacturers, farmers, and service providers a fair chance to compete and sell more of their goods and services to Russia. As the world's ninth largest economy with about 142 million people, many of whom are part of a growing middle class, Russia offers significant potential for U.S. companies, farmers and workers. In fact, Russia PNTR represents an immediate opportunity to help support much-needed U.S. economic growth and American jobs.

As you know, Russia joined the World Trade Organization (WTO) on August 22 and has started to significantly open its market. As a result, the more than 150 WTO countries—except the United States—can now fully benefit from much better access to the Russian marketplace and important new WTO rights, including stronger IP protections, greater transparency, and recourse to the WTO's dispute settlement procedures if Russia fails to meet its commitments. In contrast, the United States will not have the same WTO rights and economic opportunities until Congress passes Russia PNTR. This creates business uncertainty for U.S. companies seeking to expand in the Russian market and also gives foreign competitors a significant advantage in securing new sales and contracts there.

The President's Export Council has estimated that U.S. exports to Russia could double or triple over the next five years with Russia in the WTO – adding jobs in the U.S. services, agriculture, manufacturing, high tech and other industry sectors. With fewer and fewer legislative days left this year and other countries gaining a head start in the Russian market, this isn't an opportunity that we can afford to or should risk delaying further. PNTR benefits the United States, not Russia, and any further delay in its passage will only hurt the United States and our interests.

We believe there is strong bipartisan support and momentum for passing Russia PNTR legislation now. This is evidenced by, among other things, the 24-0 vote in the Senate Finance Committee and the near-unanimous voice vote in the House Ways and Means Committee. To help ensure U.S. companies, farmers, and workers can compete fairly in the Russian marketplace and capitalize on this pending opportunity to support American jobs and growth, we urge you to build upon this strong momentum and bipartisan support to pass the Russia PNTR legislation in September. We will continue all of our efforts to help pass this important legislation.

Sincerely,



Bob Stallman  
President  
American Farm Bureau Federation



John Engler  
President  
Business Roundtable



Bob Vastine  
President  
Coalition of Service Industries



Calman J. Cohen  
President  
Emergency Committee for American Trade



Dean C. Garfield  
President and CEO  
Information Technology Industry Council



Jay Timmons  
President and CEO  
National Association of Manufacturers



William A. Reinsch  
President  
National Foreign Trade Council



Thomas J. Donohue  
President and CEO  
U.S. Chamber of Commerce



Peter M. Robinson  
President and CEO  
U.S. Council for International Business



Edward S. Verona  
President and CEO  
U.S.-Russia Business Council