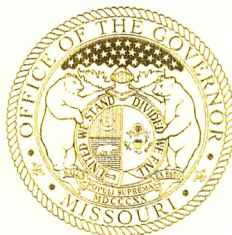


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*Michael L. Parson*

GOVERNOR  
STATE OF MISSOURI

February 26, 2019

Dear Honorable Members of the 116<sup>th</sup> United States Congress,

Trade is an issue on the mind of every American farmer, rancher and agribusiness leader. In fact, it has been for several years. American agriculture is well-positioned to start 2019 with not only a new free trade agreement, but a fairer trade agreement. The new United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) has been welcomed into rural America with open arms.

Agriculture has a history of thriving whenever agreements like this favor the American farmer and create a level playing field for buyers and sellers on both sides of the marketplace. In Missouri, agriculture is economic development. It's not just a fraction of it, but it drives our entire economy. As an \$88.4 billion industry, we know that agriculture continues to be the backbone of the Show Me State's economy. Firming up this agreement with Missouri's top two agriculture export partners marks a huge leap forward for our farmers, ranchers and agribusinesses.

Missouri agriculture is home to the largest concentration of animal health companies and plant scientists in the entire world. The agreement, as explained by U.S. trade officials, maintains zero tariffs on products traded between the U.S. and Mexico and opens new opportunities for American dairy, poultry, egg and wheat producers in the Canadian market. We are also pleased negotiators have agreed to enhance standards for agricultural biotechnology to ensure the innovation that is so critical to Missouri's economy continues to flourish.

As farmers and ranchers ourselves, we know that it's not wise to sell your commodities to one major market. We diversify our buyers to mitigate risk and ensure that we have options in our buyers. The Missouri Department of Agriculture works tirelessly to grow our current agriculture markets, encourage new value-added products, and build new trade relationships with secondary markets; we need your help in getting the USMCA signed.

While we recognize the short-term losses for America's farmers and ranchers during the renegotiation period, we see great potential and long-term gains for agriculture's future. It is now our duty as public servants to provide certainty to those farmers and ranchers by signing the new agreement as soon as possible.

It is our great honor to serve the people of Missouri alongside you. It is with that commitment and duty to our citizens that we respectfully ask you to sign into law the new United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement as a sign of support to the American farmer and rancher.

Respectfully,

A blue ink signature of Michael L. Parson, written in a cursive style.

Michael L. Parson  
Governor of Missouri

A blue ink signature of Chris Chinn, written in a cursive style.

Chris Chinn  
Director, Missouri Department of Agriculture