



Alliance for Fair Trade with India

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AFTI Commends Congressional Leaders for Urging Private Sector Involvement in High Level Dialogue between U.S. and India

14 Lawmakers Sign Letter Calling for Greater Private Sector Role in U.S.-India Strategic and Commercial Dialogue and Trade Policy Forum

WASHINGTON, D.C., March 16, 2016 – The Alliance for Fair Trade with India (AFTI) today applauded members of the House Ways and Means Committee for encouraging United States Trade Representative Michael Froman and Secretary of Commerce Penny Pritzker to allow more U.S. industry input and involvement in discussions with India.

In the letter, lawmakers thank Ambassador Froman and Secretary Pritzker for their leadership in reinvigorating the U.S.-India Strategic and Commercial Dialogue (S&CD) and U.S.-India Trade Policy Forum (TPF), but note that the high level dialogues have not yielded concrete results in leveling the playing field for American producers, exporters, and investors in India.

“While high-level meetings like the S&CD and TPF allow the U.S. government to have candid dialogue between the Indian government on major issues facing U.S. manufacturing, dialogue is not enough,” said Linda Dempsey, Vice President for International Economic Affairs at the National Association of Manufacturers. “Dialogue must produce specific, tangible progress on India’s many policies and rules that discriminate against foreign companies and investors, and that provide weak protections for American innovation and intellectual property.”

Lawmakers called for Ambassador Froman and Secretary Pritzker to engage more directly with U.S. industry as a formal part of these dialogue structures. The letter notes that “With direct private sector involvement and input, the S&CD and TPF can perhaps better serve to generate substantive improvements in India’s business climate, on IPR and other areas of concern.”

“In order for India to increase global competitiveness and attract the foreign direct investment that’s necessary to reach Prime Minister Modi’s long-term goals, it’s time for India to establish a robust IP framework that supports innovators and investors,” said Patrick Kilbride, Executive Director of International Intellectual Property at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce’s Global Intellectual Property Center. “Increasing private sector involvement in high level discussions between U.S. and India would be a positive step toward establishing a strong IP environment in India that would benefit American and Indian companies alike and set India on a path to increased economic growth and GDP.”

Congressional leaders recommend a private sector structure similar to what exists in the U.S.-China Joint Commission on Commerce and Trade (JCCT), and note that it has “led to improved understanding by Chinese officials of U.S. industry concerns and helped catalyze progress in a variety of areas over the years, including in government procurement, medical devices, and intellectual property rights (IPR).”

A copy of the full letter can be found on the AFTI website [here](#).

The letter was signed by Reps. Erik Paulsen, John Larson, Lynn Jenkins, Charles W. Boustany Jr., MD, Richard E. Neal, Jim Renacci, Ron Kind, Tom Reed, Bill Pascrell, Jr., Jason Smith, Dave Reichert, Patrick J. Tiberi, Mike Kelly, and Linda T. Sanchez.

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The Alliance for Fair Trade with India (AFTI) is committed to supporting U.S. businesses fighting against unfair and discriminatory treatment in India. For more information, go to AFTIndia.org.