

Jay Timmons
President and CEO

Feb. 15, 2022

The Honorable Antony Blinken
Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State
2201 C St. NW
Washington, DC 20520

The Honorable Katherine Tai
United States Trade Representative
600 17th St. NW
Washington, DC 20508

The Honorable Gina Raimondo
Secretary of Commerce
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20520

The Honorable Jacob Sullivan
Assistant to the President for National
Security Affairs
National Security Council
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Secretary Blinken, Secretary Raimondo, Ambassador Tai and Mr. Sullivan:

Manufacturers of all sizes and their workers depend on global commerce, including in the growing economies in the Indo-Pacific region. The Biden administration has hit the ground running with plans to pursue a new Indo-Pacific Economic Framework. Manufacturers are encouraged by assurances that the framework will address industry priorities, including the importance of promoting and facilitating high standards trade in the region. This is critical, as the Indo-Pacific region represents more than two-fifths of total U.S. manufacturing trade—more than half of which is outside of China.

As the administration continues to develop the framework, it must prioritize an approach that supports manufacturing and manufacturing jobs by opening markets, strengthening U.S. innovation and technology leadership, raising global standards to U.S. levels and putting in place best-in-class trade rules. The United States must also be equipped to hold our trading partners accountable for their commitments, including through strong enforcement mechanisms. This approach is necessary so that manufacturers in the United States do not fall behind our competitors in the Indo-Pacific, such as China, that are actively negotiating and implementing new trade agreements to lock in opportunities for their manufacturers, not ours.

As such, a U.S. economic engagement approach for the Indo-Pacific region should include key elements including, but not limited to:

- Prioritizing efforts to eliminate trade barriers in the region that undermine the competitiveness of manufacturers in the United States;
- Securing regional or bilateral digital trade commitments in areas such as cross-border data flows, data innovation, artificial intelligence, trade facilitation, data privacy, cybersecurity and digital competition;

- Establishing mechanisms to allow regular information sharing on real-time supply chain bottlenecks and disruptions to facilitate more effective government-to-government coordination;
- Instituting strong intellectual property rules that set high global standards for IP protection and mechanisms for mutual dialogue on ways to strengthen regional innovation;
- Ensuring stronger alignment on customs procedures and approaches;
- Coordinating and streamlining export control approaches with key allies and partners;
- Brokering joint commitments and common approaches with allies and stakeholders to end forced labor in regional supply chains;
- Strengthening collaboration on standards, regulatory and conformity assessment with countries in the region to support good regulatory practices and forward-looking standards development; and
- Launching a process to join the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership.

We recognize that advancing an ambitious agenda for the Indo-Pacific with clear rules and strong commitments will require partnership between the administration and a bipartisan congressional coalition, in close collaboration with the business community, workers and other stakeholders. Manufacturers stand ready to work with you in support of this effort.

Sincerely,



Jay Timmons