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January 20, 2010

The Honorable Ron Kirk
Ambassador
Office of the U.S. Trade Representative
600 17th Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20508

Dear Ambassador Kirk:

We are disturbed to learn of Taiwan's significant abrogation of our October 22, 2009 agreement governing the importation of beef and beef products from the United States into Taiwan ("the Protocol").


As your office noted in a December 29 statement, the Protocol is science-based, faithful to the guidelines of the World Organisation for Animal Health ("OIE"), and consistent with the requirements of the World Trade Organization ("WTO") Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures. We share your view that the recent actions by the Legislative Yuan banning the importation from the United States of ground beef and certain other offals and beef products and directing the Taiwanese Administration to ban entry of beef from cattle over 30 months are in direct contravention to these international guidelines and principles, as well as the Protocol. Indeed, Taiwan's own risk assessment has confirmed the safety of the newly banned imports.

The January 5, 2010 vote of the Legislative Yuan will not only have a significant effect on exports of U.S. beef and beef products to Taiwan, it has broader implications for U.S.-Taiwan trade relations. We understand that USTR intends to make use of the formal consultation mechanism in the Protocol and is exploring those that may exist within the WTO to ensure Taiwan's compliance with its international obligations. We support these efforts.

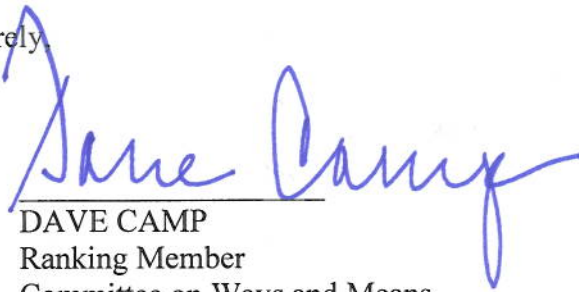
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It is our understanding that USTR has suspended indefinitely any discussions under the Trade and Investment Framework Agreement ("TIFA") in place with Taiwan. We support your action in this regard as well. Furthermore, we request that you consult with us before you reconvene any TIFA-related discussions with Taiwan. At this time, we do not believe that the United States should move forward on these talks until Taiwan is once again compliant with its obligations under the Protocol.


Sincerely,




CHARLES B. RANGEL
Chairman
Committee on Ways and Means



DAVE CAMP
Ranking Member
Committee on Ways and Means



SANDER M. LEVIN
Chairman, Subcommittee on Trade
Committee on Ways and Means



KEVIN BRADY
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Trade
Committee on Ways and Means

cc: Mr. Jason C. Yuan, Representative, Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative
Office in the United States
The Honorable Demetrios J. Marantis, Ambassador, Deputy U.S. Trade
Representative