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February 22, 2022

The Honorable Jason E. Kearns
Chair
U.S. International Trade Commission
500 E Street, SW
Washington, DC 20436

Dear Chair Kearns:

Haiti and the United States have long had a close economic relationship, and the U.S. government has a longstanding interest in promoting economic development in Haiti. In 1983, Congress enacted the Caribbean Basin Economic Recovery Act (CBERA) to encourage increased trade between the United States and the Caribbean countries including Haiti, and to foster economic development in the countries of the region as part of the broader Caribbean Basin Initiative (CBI). CBERA was expanded by the Trade Act of 2000 and amended by the Trade Act of 2002. Additional benefits specific to Haiti were added through the Haitian Hemispheric Opportunity through Partnership Encouragement (HOPE) Act of 2006, HOPE II in 2008, and the Haiti Economic Lift Program (HELP) in 2010.

The HOPE and HELP preference programs are scheduled to expire on September 30, 2025. As the Committee assesses the existing program, I request, on behalf of the Committee and pursuant to section 332(g) of the Tariff Act of 1930, that the U.S. International Trade Commission (the Commission) conduct an investigation and provide a report on Haiti's history of international trade since 1980, with special attention paid to the CBERA, Generalized System of Preferences (GSP), Caribbean Basin Trade Partnership Act (CBTPA), and HOPE and HELP preference programs and their impact on Haiti's economy and workers. I further request that the Commission provide several case studies showing the impact of these preference programs on selected industries of importance to Haiti's economy.

The Commission should solicit input from a wide range of stakeholders and experts, and we encourage the Commission to reach out to as diverse an array of voices as possible, particularly individuals, businesses, and workers in and from Haiti, and to reflect that diversity in the report.

The report should include the following:

1. An overview of the Haitian economy, including, to the extent practicable, employment, nominal, and inflation-adjusted wages, working conditions, respect for core labor standards, and U.S. imports from Haiti, 1980–2021, highlighting key products that are currently exported and key products that were historically important to Haiti and are either no longer exported to the United States or are exported in reduced quantities.
2. The role of U.S. preference programs in shaping Haiti's economy, including a description of the eligibility requirements, rules of origin, and scope of product coverage for each program.
3. An overview of the competitiveness of the Haitian economy, including, to the extent practicable: a description of the business environment and trade-facilitating infrastructure in Haiti; a description of the Haitian workforce, including availability and skill level of workers, and policies and practices in Haitian labor markets; and a description of the impact that recent natural disasters and significant political events have had on Haiti's economy and on U.S.-Haiti trade.
4. Case studies for selected goods currently or historically exported from Haiti (such as apparel, tropical fruits, and sporting goods, including baseballs, basketballs, and softballs), and to the extent practicable, identification of products with potential for increased exports. Each case study should include, to the extent practicable:
 - a. Trends in production and exports, including an analysis of the historical trends, as applicable;
 - b. A description of the industry in Haiti, including employment, nominal, and inflation-adjusted wages, and working conditions, and the industry's position in the supply chain.

I request that the report be delivered ten months from the date of this request. I intend to make the report available to the public in its entirety; therefore, I request that the report not include confidential business information. Your assistance in this matter is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,



Richard E. Neal

Chair