

May 2, 2016

The Honorable Penny Pritzker
Secretary of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20230

The Honorable Michael Froman
United States Trade Representative
500 17th Street NW
Washington, DC 20508

Dear Secretary Pritzker and Ambassador Froman:

Manufacturers throughout the United States remain firmly committed to an active, robust U.S. trade policy that eliminates trade barriers overseas and allows manufacturers to sell to the 95 percent of global consumers that live outside of our borders. A particular focus of the National Association of Manufacturers (NAM) and its members is tackling trade barriers in major foreign priority markets, such as India.

India today is the world's fastest growing large economy and ranks as the world's third largest economy by World Bank statistics on purchasing power parity (PPP). Significant trade barriers, however, remain in areas such as tariffs and trade facilitation, localization policies, intellectual property rights protection, and the ease of doing business. Concrete and sustained progress is needed to address these troublesome issues that undermine the ability of manufacturers in the United States to forge a more robust commercial relationship with India.

Since Prime Minister Narendra Modi first came into office in May 2014 with a positive message that India was "open for business," the U.S. and Indian governments have partnered to expand their commercial relationship, including the renewal of two critical forums to discuss economic and commercial issues: the U.S.-India Strategic & Commercial Dialogue (S&CD) and the U.S.-India Trade Policy Forum (TPF). These dialogues are important channels to resolve outstanding commercial issues, but must move beyond rhetoric to capture concrete deliverables.

As you and your colleagues prepare for this year's U.S.-India dialogues, I am pleased to offer the NAM's recommendations for specific priorities and deliverables that would demonstrate concrete progress in this year's dialogues. As detailed in the attached review of priorities, manufacturers in the United States are seeking tangible progress on India's stated goals of improving the ease of doing business in India and advancing manufacturing and innovation in its economy to increase investment and growth. As the nation's largest and oldest manufacturing association, the NAM has substantial experience in identifying and advancing the types of government policies that will grow a vibrant manufacturing economy and provides some specific examples where India's policies could improve not only the U.S.-India commercial relationship, but India's own ability to foster industry growth.

On behalf of manufacturers throughout the United States, I urge you to press these priorities in all of your discussions with your Indian counterparts, and to make them priorities for the S&CD and TPF. These are the types of outcomes that will ensure that the United States can build – and fully benefit from – its deepening relationship with India in ways that will promote greater growth and opportunity.

With all best wishes, I remain,

Sincerely,



Jay Timmons