

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

January 27, 2015

The Honorable Michael Froman
Office of the United States Trade Representative
600 17th Street NW
Washington, DC 20508

Dear Ambassador Froman,

We write to you to express our strong support for reauthorization of the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) this year. AGOA has served as the cornerstone of the U.S. commercial relationship with Africa since its enactment in 2000, successfully expanding U.S. trade with African countries that show a commitment to good governance and democratic principles. It has improved the trade environment both for U.S. and African businesses, and has spurred significant economic growth. However, we believe it needs to be carefully reviewed and modified to address numerous challenges and concerns.

One issue that is of great importance to both of us and our states is that of poultry trade. The poultry industry is an incredibly important economic driver in our states and across the nation. The industry supports 1.8 million jobs and contributes nearly \$470 billion to the national economy, making up roughly 3% of GDP. Export markets, particularly for chicken, make up approximately 20% of total American production.

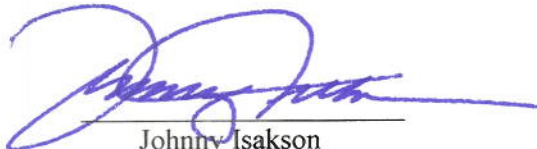
As you may know, South Africa levied antidumping duties on U.S. poultry fourteen years ago, effectively blocking our companies from accessing the market. In 2013, the WTO ruled against China in an almost identical system of antidumping duties imposed on U.S. poultry. There is now precedent within the WTO that South Africa's antidumping duties do not conform with international trade regulations. However, despite repeated attempts by the U.S. government and U.S. poultry industry to remove these duties, they have remained in place.

We have been closely following discussions regarding poultry trade and are concerned that following an initial meeting between the U.S. and South African poultry industries in September of last year, no progress has been made to address the issue. We have reached out directly to President Zuma to express our concerns with the lack of progress and are eager to find a resolution.

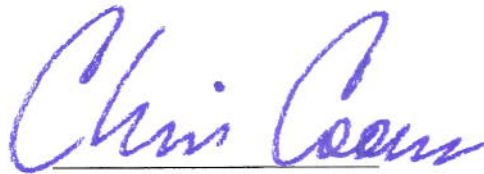
To that end, we write to express our intent to address this issue in the reauthorization of AGOA. South Africa, and other nations who benefit from trade preferences with the United States under AGOA must address trade barriers in their own nations that limit or block U.S. exports. If this situation is not resolved before we conclude the legislative process to reauthorize AGOA, we will need to consider strengthening AGOA to prevent South Africa from benefitting from duty preferences while continuing to discriminate against U.S. goods, specifically poultry.

We look forward to working with you on this important matter.

Sincerely,



Johnny Isakson
United States Senator



Christopher A. Coons
United States Senator

CC: Chairman Hatch
Ranking Member Wyden
Senate Finance Committee