

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

November 14, 2022

The Honorable Chris Magnus  
Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection  
1300 Pennsylvania Ave. NW  
Washington, DC 20229

Dear Commissioner Magnus,

We write in strong opposition to the recent proposal submitted to the U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) by your Commercial Customs Operations Advisory Committee (COAC) which calls for ending public disclosure of import data for goods that arrive on our shores via ocean transport.

The public availability of such data is crucial for the enforcement trade agreements, such as those that protect American workers from competing with goods manufactured with forced labor. Currently key import data from goods arriving via air, road or rail is not subject to public disclosure. However, federal law (19 U.S.C § 1431) provides for the public disclosure of key information from vessel manifests. Ocean-going freight is responsible for approximately half of the imported goods entering the United States in a given year, and as such transparency into goods arriving via marine traffic is indispensable in tracing and monitoring forced labor risks in supply chains.

Investigative work by journalists and other members of civil society relying upon the public disclosure of such trade data has been critical in assisting your agency's enforcement of Section 307 of the Tariff Act of 1930 (19 U.S.C. §1307), which prohibits importing any product that was mined, produced, or manufactured wholly or in part by forced labor, in addition to the Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act. Additionally, public transparency of maritime trade data has greatly facilitated Congress' authority under Article 1 Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution to oversee and regulate commerce with foreign nations. Ending public disclosure of this trade information would impede congressional oversight over foreign commerce and significantly impair CBP's capacity to ensure goods that arrive on our shores are not produced by forced labor.

Moreover, removing from public disclosure import data from shipping manifests stands in stark contrast to the stated goals of your 21<sup>st</sup> Century Customs Framework (21CCF). [As your agency says](#), "the complexities of the modern supply chain have made it increasingly difficult to identify and deter violative behavior . . . reform is needed in order to protect American workers and business [and] ensure fair competition . . ." First among your goals for the 21CCF is achieving supply chain transparency, as "Improved visibility into global supply chains will strengthen CBP's ability to root out violative actors, supporting ethical production methods and leveling the playing field for domestic industry." We concur, and call upon CBP to adhere to this 21CCF goal to increase and not lessen supply chain transparency.

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

The COAC's proposal would obscure public visibility into key trade data, in contravention of clear congressional intent, and inhibit the identification of supply chains that rely upon unfree labor and the exploitation of workers abroad. We urge CBP to reject COAC's proposal and continue to take a strong stand against initiatives that would permit the prevalence of coerced labor.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. We look forward to receiving your response.

Sincerely,



---

Lloyd Doggett  
Member of Congress



---

Earl Blumenauer  
Member of Congress  
Chairman, Subcommittee on  
Trade



---

Brendan F. Boyle  
Member of Congress



---

André Carson  
Member of Congress



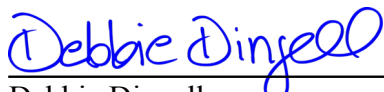
---

David N. Cicilline  
Member of Congress



---

Rosa L. DeLauro  
Member of Congress



---

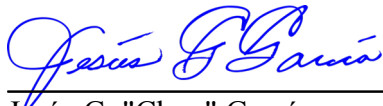
Debbie Dingell  
Member of Congress



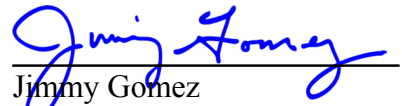
---

Dwight Evans  
Member of Congress

Congress of the United States  
Washington, DC 20515



Jesús G. "Chuy" García  
Member of Congress



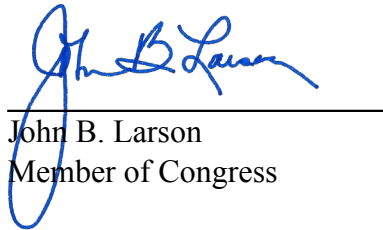
Jimmy Gomez  
Member of Congress



Sheila Jackson Lee  
Member of Congress



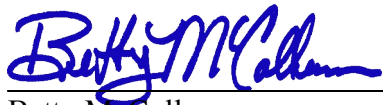
Marcy Kaptur  
Member of Congress



John B. Larson  
Member of Congress



Barbara Lee  
Member of Congress



Betty McCollum  
Member of Congress



James P. McGovern  
Member of Congress



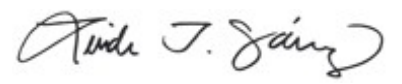
Gwen S. Moore  
Member of Congress



Ilhan Omar  
Member of Congress

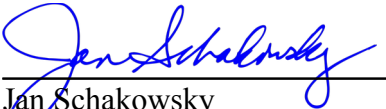


Jimmy Panetta  
Member of Congress




Linda T. Sánchez  
Member of Congress

Congress of the United States  
Washington, DC 20515




---

Jan Schakowsky  
Member of Congress



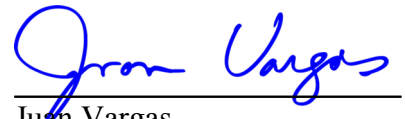
---

Thomas R. Suozzi  
Member of Congress



---

Mike Thompson  
Member of Congress



---

Juan Vargas  
Member of Congress