



Washington Council on International Trade

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**WCIT Encourages NAFTA Modernization While Emphasizing Benefits of Trade with Canada & Mexico**

SEATTLE – The Washington Council on International Trade and its members – manufacturers, farmers, retailers and service providers from across Washington state – welcomed today’s news that the Trump Administration will seek to improve and modernize NAFTA, but will not pull out of the agreement.

“The NAFTA agreement is over twenty years old, and it does need updates to make sure that it reflects 21<sup>st</sup> century technologies and ways of doing business,” said Lori Otto Punke, president of WCIT. “The Trans-Pacific Partnership, for example, had taken great strides toward improving NAFTA. We need to make sure any changes to NAFTA enhance current benefits that the agreement provides, open new opportunities for Washington state, and raise trade standards.

“Washington state has a vibrant trade relationship with Canada and Mexico that supports 330,000 Washington jobs. We send more of our exports to Canada than any country other than China, and we run a consistent trade surplus with Mexico. Our employers’ supply chains are also tightly woven with our NAFTA partners. For example, 40% of the content of imports from Mexico was produced in the U.S.. Similarly, our manufacturers and aerospace companies rely on Canadian and Mexican suppliers.

“We are encouraged the administration has acknowledged the need to update digital trade rules; streamline regulations, sanitary and phytosanitary measures, and customs procedures; protect intellectual property rights; and address issues with state-owned enterprises in their intent to begin negotiations. We urge the administration to thoughtfully approach the modernization process to take into account the agreement’s benefits, and strengthen our trade relationships with Canada and Mexico.”

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**About the Washington Council on International Trade**

WCIT is the only organization in Washington dedicated exclusively to advocating for public policies that increase our state's international competitiveness. On behalf of its members — manufacturers, farmers, retailers and service providers – WCIT advocates for trade policies and investments that benefit Washington's workers and employers.

WCIT works to:

- **Evaluate** and share objective data on the impact of trade policies on Washington’s economy
- **Educate** our local, state and federal elected officials about the benefits of strong international trade policies and investments to Washington employers and residents

- **Engage** diverse stakeholders from across the state – including manufacturers, retailers, farmers and service providers - to drive policy changes that help them succeed in the global marketplace

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