

March 22, 2019

The Honorable Robert E. Lighthizer
United States Trade Representative
Office of the U.S. Trade Representative
Winder Building, 600 17th Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20508

Dear Ambassador Lighthizer:

As you know, the Council of the Americas and our more than 220 member corporations strongly support the U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement. We have already begun to visit with Congressional representatives to express this view. We believe that the agreement, once implemented, will strengthen the U.S. economy and support our national and geostrategic interests. We look forward to working with you and Congress to ensure its passage.

Nonetheless, we continue to be concerned about the administration's use of Section 232 and the imposition of tariffs on steel and aluminum imports from Canada and Mexico. These tariffs are creating tremendous economic uncertainty in the U.S. and overseas, jeopardizing the very economic competitiveness of North America that USMCA seeks to improve. We urge the administration to find a path forward allowing for the early removal of these tariffs.

Similarly, we do not believe the United States should withdraw from the current NAFTA agreement without the USMCA already in place. Such a step would be counterproductive and would not only jeopardize USMCA, but could also cause significant economic disruption and job losses across North America. We therefore encourage the administration to seek passage of USMCA while maintaining the existing NAFTA agreement.

Please know that the Council of the Americas remains ready to work with you in support of a strengthened trade agenda for North America and the broader Western Hemisphere.

Sincerely,



Andres Gluski
Chairman and CEO, AES Corporation and
Chairman, Council of the Americas



Chris Padilla
Vice President, Government and Regulatory
Affairs, IBM Corporation, and Co-Chair,
Trade Advisory Group, Council of the
Americas