

May 20, 2026

The Honorable Jason Smith  
Chairman  
House Committee on Ways & Means  
1011 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Richard Neal  
Ranking Member  
House Committee on Ways & Means  
372 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Smith and Ranking Member Neal:

We are writing to express our strong support for H.R. 4780, the "USTRx Act," introduced by Chairman Arrington and Congressman Buchanan.

Over the course of our public service, we have worked to advance U.S. economic interests, promote fair and reciprocal trade, and protect the intellectual property that underpins American innovation. The United States leads the world in the discovery and development of innovative medicines because of its commitment to a competitive system that rewards risk-taking, research, and breakthrough innovation.

However, a range of policies in key foreign markets -- including unreasonable pricing and reimbursement practices, weak intellectual property frameworks, and biased health technology assessment systems -- often fail to fully recognize the value of new medicines, undermining incentives for continued investment in research and development and placing U.S. companies at a disadvantage. These challenges are particularly prevalent in advanced economies such as Australia, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, and South Korea.

Taken together, these approaches distort global incentives for innovation and shift a disproportionate share of the responsibility for financing pharmaceutical research and development onto the United States. Addressing these challenges is important not only to improving long-term affordability and access for American patients, but also to supporting a more balanced and sustainable global framework for medical innovation.

The USTRx Act would take an important and practical step toward addressing these issues by establishing a Chief Pharmaceutical Trade Negotiator within the Office of the United States Trade Representative. Creating a dedicated, senior-level official focused on pharmaceutical market access and pricing policies would appropriately elevate these issues within U.S. trade policy and strengthen the United States' ability to identify, prioritize, and respond to unfair foreign practices using available trade tools. USTR has a longstanding, congressionally directed practice of establishing negotiators to focus on sectors and issues critical to the U.S. economy

and trade. Establishing a Chief Pharmaceutical Trade Negotiator would ensure that pharmaceutical trade issues receive a comparable level of attention, accountability, and expertise.

Based on our collective experience, sustained, senior-level engagement is often necessary to make meaningful progress on complex and persistent trade barriers. Establishing this role would help ensure that these issues receive the consistent attention and strategic focus they require.

Ensuring that global markets appropriately value American biopharmaceutical innovation is critical to advancing medical breakthroughs, supporting high-quality jobs, strengthening domestic manufacturing, and maintaining U.S. leadership in the life sciences sector.

We appreciate your consideration of this legislation and commend the leadership of Chairman Arrington and Congressman Buchanan on this important issue.

Sincerely,

**Jeffrey Gerrish**, Deputy United States Trade Representative (2018-2020)

**Andrei Iancu**, Under Secretary of Commerce for Intellectual Property and Director of the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (2018-2021)

**David Kappos**, Under Secretary of Commerce for Intellectual Property and Director of the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (2009-2013)

**Gary Locke**, United States Ambassador to the People's Republic of China (2011-2014), United States Secretary of Commerce (2009-2011), Governor of the State of Washington (1997-2005)