



18 October 2019

Cecilia Malmström
European Commissioner for Trade
European Commission
Brussels

Phil Hogan
European Commissioner for Agriculture & Rural Development
Commissioner-designate for Trade
European Commission
Brussels

Dear Commissioners:

On behalf of the associations listed below, we are writing to reiterate and reaffirm our strong support for fair trade and open markets and to renew our shared request to the United States (U.S.) and European Union (EU) to remove the tariffs on EU and U.S. spirits and wines without delay.

Our industries had a long and active history supporting efforts to liberalize global trade in distilled spirits and wines, which allowed our products to compete freely and fairly in global markets. The U.S. and EU wines and spirits sectors have become very interconnected, with companies owning a range of European and American distinctive spirits and wines. We have continued to work together with our respective governments to improve market access in other countries through the elimination of other tariffs, discriminatory taxes and other trade barriers to our exports.

This new round of tariffs will further damage a transatlantic industry that has already been negatively impacted by the EU's retaliatory tariffs on American Whiskey. These tariffs are greatly harming the industry's competitiveness, long-standing partnerships, consumers, workers and our farm suppliers. Unfortunately, American Whiskey exports to the EU have decreased nearly 21 percent by value since the EU tariffs were imposed in June 2018. The new U.S. tariffs on certain EU wines and spirits could result in the loss of 8,000 good-paying jobs across the U.S. beverage alcohol sector, from importers, distributors, wholesalers, to the hospitality sector. Clearly, there are no winners in a trade war.



We call on the U.S. and the EU to honor their shared commitment to reach a negotiated settlement to the current disputes by immediately and simultaneously removing the EU’s retaliatory tariff on U.S. whiskey and the U.S. tariffs on imported EU spirits and wines. We stand together to urge continued dialogue that restores and recommits to the bilateral tariff-free market access for distilled spirits and low tariff rates for wines that have benefited EU and U.S. producers, consumers and economies on both sides of the Atlantic.

We respectfully request a meeting at your earliest convenience for several of our member company CEOs to discuss our joint concerns. We are making a similar request for our member company CEOs to meet with Robert E. Lighthizer United States Trade Representatives.

Signed:

Chris Swonger, CEO, The Distilled Spirits Council of the United States

Matt Dogali, President & CEO American Distilled Spirits Association

Christian Porta, President, spiritsEUROPE

Oliver Loomes, Chair of Drinks Ireland

Eric Gregory, President, Kentucky Distillers Association

Patrick Raguenaud, President, Bureau National Interprofessionnel du Cognac (BNIC)

Karen Betts, CEO, Scotch Whisky Association

Robert M. Tobiassen, President, National Association of Beverage Importers



Margie A. S. Lehrman

Margie A.S. Lehrman, CEO, American Craft Spirits Association

John D. Bodnovich

John Bodnovich, President & CEO American beverage Licensees

Alison Leavitt

Alison Leavitt, Managing Director, Wine and Spirits Shippers Association

Miles Beale

Miles Beale, Chief Executive, The Wine and Spirit Trade Association

Michelle L. Korsmo

Michelle L. Korsmo, President & CEO Wine & Spirits Wholesalers of America

Bosco Torremocha

Bosco Torremocha G^a de la Rasilla, Director Ejecutivo, Federación Española de Bebidas Espirituosas (FEBE)