



October 18, 2019

The Honorable Robert E. Lighthizer  
United States Trade Representative  
Executive Office of the President  
600 17th Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20508

Dear Mr. Ambassador:

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 the EU Commissioner for Trade, Ms. Cecilia Malmström and her designated successor, the current EU Commissioner for Agriculture, Mr. Phil Hogan.

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*

**Karen Betts**, CEO, Scotch Whisky Association

*Robert M. Tobiassen*

**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<sup>a</sup> de la Rasilla**, Director Ejecutivo, Federación Española de Bebidas Espirituosas (FEBE)