

THE UNITED STATES INTERNATIONAL TRADE COMMISSION

In the Matter of:)
)
DISTRIBUTIONAL EFFECTS:)
IMPACTS ON UNDERSERVED)
COMMUNITIES)

Tuesday,
March 8, 2022

California State University,
Fresno
5241 N. Maple Avenue
Fresno, California

The roundtable commenced, pursuant to notice, at
1:09 p.m., before the United States International Trade
Commission.

PARTICIPANTS:

USITC:

COMMISSIONER DAVID S. JOHANSON, Moderator
CHAIR JASON E. KEARNS
VICE CHAIR RANDOLPH J. STAYIN
COMMISSIONER RHONDA SCHMIDTLEIN
COMMISSIONER AMY A. KARPEL
ROOP BHATTI, Chief of Staff
MICHAEL ROBBINS, Economist to Commissioner
Johanson
WILLIAM R. BISHOP, Supervisory Hearings and
Information Officer

External:

SERHAT ASCI, California State University, Fresno
ELIZABETH CARRANZA, California Apple Commission
CASEY CREAMER, California Citrus Mutual
LEONARD HAMILTON, MEC
WYATT MEADOWS, District Representative for
Operating Engineers, Local 3
IAN LEMAY, California Fresh Fruit Association

APPEARANCES: (Cont'd)

External:

AURORA RIOS, MEC
WILL JAMIL WILTSCHKO, California Trade Justice
Coalition

External (via Webex):

HABIB ASADULLAH, California Department of Food
and Agriculture
ALICIA BARKER, Oregon Employment Department
NIAZ DORRY, National Family Farm Coalition
BLAKE KONCZAL, Fresno Regional Workforce
Development Board (FRWDB) (via Webex)
REY LEÓN, The LEAP Institute (via Webex)
MILY TREVIÑO-SAUCEDA, Alianza Nacional de
Campesinas, Inc.
DILLON SAVORY, Fresno-Madera-Tulare-Kings Central
Labor Council
DEAN SHOWERS, Alliance for American Manufacturing
ISMAEL HERRERA, California Forward
SONIA MURPHY, Institute for Agriculture and Trade
Policy
ANTONIO TOVAR, National Family Firm Coalition

P R O C E E D I N G S

(1:09 p.m.)

MR. BISHOP: Commissioner Johanson, I'll yield the floor. Thank you so much.

COMMISSIONER JOHANSON: All right. Thank you, Bill. Good afternoon. My name is David Johanson, and I'm a Commissioner at the U.S. International Trade Commission. The Agency's other (technical interference), I would like to welcome (technical interference) the regional effects of bait and trade policy.

I note that the Chair of the Commission, Jason Kearns, is here and present today. He's sitting next to me. The Agency's other Commissioners, Rhonda Schmidtlein, Randy Stayin, and Amy Karpel are participating remotely.

Before we begin the discussion, I would like to give you some background on the International Trade Commission. I will then speak on the roundtable itself.

The International Trade Commission is an independent agency, so it is not part of the President's Administration, and it is not part of the Congress. It is truly an independent agency within the federal government.

The Commission is nonpartisan. The competition of the Commission reflects its nonpartisan nature. For example, I am a Republican, yet I was appointed by a Democratic President. Other Commissioners include Democrats who were

1 appointed by a Republican President. So, the work of the
2 Commission, including today's roundtable, is conducted in a
3 nonpartisan manner.

4 Among its functions the Commission provides the
5 President, U.S. Trade Representative, and Congress with
6 independent analysis and information on matters relating to
7 international trade.

8 Holding today's roundtable is U.S. Trade
9 Representative Katherine Tai, a member of President Biden's
10 Cabinet, requests that the Commission conduct an
11 investigation on the distributional effects of trade and
12 trade policy on U.S. workers.

13 Today's event is one of seven roundtables at which
14 we will collect input on the potentially differing effects of
15 U.S. trade and trade policy on U.S. workers. The roundtable
16 is focused on workers, including workers characterized by
17 different skills, wage and salary levels, genders, race,
18 ethnicity, age, and income levels, especially as they affect
19 under-represented, and under-served communities.

20 At the conclusion of the seven roundtables, the
21 Commission will submit a written report to the U.S. Trade
22 Representative, Katherine Tai, summarizing the information
23 that we gathered during our roundtables. This report will be
24 delivered in October of this year.

25 While the International Trade Commission is based

1 on Washington, D.C., we are holding today's roundtable in
2 Fresno as it's important for the Commission to hear from
3 people throughout the country impacted by international
4 trade. We chose to conduct the roundtable in Fresno given
5 the varied economy of the Central Valley, which is a major
6 agricultural, manufacturing, and services region. In
7 addition, Fresno and the Central Valley are well-known for
8 their ethnic and cultural diversity.

9 In a former job, I traveled regularly to Fresno,
10 and it's great to be back here in the Central Valley.
11 Another Commission employee is even more familiar with
12 Fresno, Roop Bathi, who is Chair Kearns Chief of Staff, is
13 from Fresno, and I know that she's pleased to be back in her
14 hometown today. There is Roop right there raising her hand.

15 My role in today's roundtable is to ask questions,
16 and manage the flow of discussion. Your role as a
17 participant is to share experiences, opinions, and
18 information. We want this to be a wide-ranging conversation.
19 Please remember that there are no right or wrong answers, and
20 we value all perspectives.

21 Before we start, I'd like to go over a few
22 housekeeping matters. Our discussion today is scheduled to
23 last for two hours with a short break after the first hour.
24 Having said that, we may continue our discussion past 3:00
25 p.m. if our discussion continues to be lively. We want to

1 ensure that everyone has an opportunity to be heard.

2 Please be conscious of the fact that this is not a
3 private meeting, and that the discussion today is open to the
4 public, and to the press; therefore, you should be careful
5 not to share any information that you, or your organization,
6 views as confidential. In other words, with regard to
7 today's discussion, what you say in Fresno will not
8 necessarily stay in Fresno.

9 If we do have media joining us today, please feel
10 free to reach out to our External Relations office if you
11 have any questions. The contact information is on the
12 Commission's website.

13 If participants would like to make a comment,
14 please place your nameplate on its end like this. Virtual
15 participants can use the Webex raised hand feature, and I
16 will recognize you in turn.

17 If you are participating by telephone, or are
18 otherwise unable to use the raised hand feature, please email
19 J's Powell, or Tamar Khachaturian, and they will notify me
20 that you would like to speak. Their email addresses are
21 Jennifer, that's J-E-N-N-I-F-E-R dot P-O-W-E-L-L at
22 usitc.gov.

23 And Tamar's email address is T-A-M-A-R dot
24 K-H-A-C-H-A-T-U-R-I-A-N at usitc.gov.

25 Please remember that only registered participants

1 will be invited to speak during today's discussion. If you
2 are not a registered participant, and would like to provide
3 input following this event, you're welcome to contact project
4 staff, and submit written questions at the following email
5 address: D as in digital, E as in effects at usitc.gov.

6 Whenever you make a comment, we ask that you state
7 your name so it is clear to everyone who is speaking. If
8 there's an organization with which you are affiliated that
9 you'd like to identify, please also state the name of that
10 organization when you make your comment.

11 Lastly, I will invite my fellow Commissioners and
12 ITC staff to pose any questions that they may have at the end
13 of the session. I request that Commissioners and their staff
14 hold questions until that time.

15 Lastly, I would like to thank Fresno State
16 University for letting us use their facilities here today.
17 Your staff has been very cooperative, and we appreciate that.
18 You have a beautiful campus. I've enjoyed walking around it,
19 and I must admit that I'm envious of the students who get to
20 spend their days here.

21 With that, I will start with my first question of
22 the roundtable. This first question is a rather basic
23 question, and is an amalgamation of several possible
24 questions that were sent to you.

25 The question is how has the international trade

1 impacted workers in your community? Has international trade
2 had positive effects, negative effects, or is the situation
3 more nuanced?

4 Examples of effects of international trade include
5 employment opportunities, or losses of employment, growth in
6 businesses, or business losses, improved working conditions,
7 or declines in working conditions, and growth in wages, or
8 decline in wages.

9 So, I would like to open the floor to that basic
10 question. Anyone is welcome to begin speaking.

11 MR. LEMAY: Ian Lemay with the California Fresh
12 Fruit Association. I guess as a basic response back, I
13 represent trade is looked at as a net positive. Roughly
14 every season between 30 and 40 percent of our [technical
15 interference] exported primarily around the Pacific Rim.

16 Is this on, or is it a little finicky there? How
17 is that?

18 I guess as an initial response, positive. It's
19 helped us to solidify our business models, expand it, and one
20 of the most significant priorities of our organization is to
21 try, specifically with the California stone fruit, is to try
22 to expand those market access points to help sustain the
23 business.

24 COMMISSIONER JOHANSON: Thank you, Mr. Lemay. Mr.
25 Meadows.

1 MR. MEADOWS: Hi, I'm Wyatt Meadows, Operating
2 Engineers Local Union 3.

3 I would say that exporting has been positive with
4 Operating Engineers Local 3 on the harbors and docks. We
5 have a lot of operating engineers that receive goods, and
6 export that go out there. As that's increased, you know, a
7 lot of the exporting increases has created more positive
8 jobs, more jobs that are more -- have favorable working
9 conditions, and things of that nature.

10 COMMISSIONER JOHANSON: Thank you, Mr. Meadows. I
11 might just suggest you all put your microphones right next to
12 your face. When I first started speaking, I -- no one could
13 hear me either, so, anyway, I suggest you do that.

14 MR. CREAMER: Good afternoon. Casey Creamer with
15 California Citrus Mutual. I would say it is nuanced, very
16 nuanced, and it depends on the commodity, and a lot of other
17 factors. But export markets for the citrus industry is
18 roughly about 30 percent of our overall share, about 70
19 percent is utilized here domestically, and it's a primary
20 market for us.

21 The exports are where, you know -- tend to be a
22 little more profit margin where we can sustain our
23 operations, and we continue to have cost increases here in
24 the United States, and we're also seeing increases of
25 shipments of competition from other countries that are coming

1 in.

2 And it typically used to be a little bit more
3 counter-seasonal with, you know, we're sort of in our peak
4 season now, and then the offshore fruit would come in in the
5 off season, and those seasons are being extended, and
6 overlapping at the beginning and the end of our season, and
7 that's usually where our growers were able to get a profit
8 where the middle of the season really wasn't where it was at.
9 And, so we're getting squeezed on the ends.

10 And, so, while it's a net positive, there's also,
11 you know, a net negative, and, so, I think it's a growing net
12 negative where the export was a very much of positive early
13 on, and that's diminishing, and especially now the
14 transportation crisis that we're having now, it's a lot
15 harder for us to get it out, and it seems to be product
16 coming in as well.

17 And, so, I think it's very nuanced. I think it's
18 something that needs continue to be watched, and continue to
19 make sure that our domestic producers, their families, the
20 employees who rely -- the rural communities, you know, really
21 rely on agriculture as the base of the economy. There is
22 nothing else in some of these other communities. It's not
23 like another Google is going to come to, you know, some parts
24 of rural California.

25 So, I think it's very nuanced. There's tradeoffs,

1 and it's something we're just going to have to watch very,
2 very closely. Thank you.

3 COMMISSIONER JOHANSON: Thank you, Mr. Creamer.
4 Yes, I'm sorry, Ms. Carranza.

5 MS. CARRANZA: Am I working?

6 COMMISSIONER JOHANSON: Yes, that's correct.

7 MS. CARRANZA: Hi. I think what Casey and Ian just
8 said, I think exports continue to be a really important
9 factor for the industries that we represent in our office,
10 for the blueberry industry specifically, expanding upon our
11 current export markets to obtain new market access.
12 Opportunities has been a major focus of our organization, and
13 other blueberry organizations as well.

14 I think to touch on Casey's point, I think with the
15 increase of import pressure coming into the United States, I
16 think these export markets become even more important just to
17 help stabilize the domestic market here, and give that return
18 back to the growers that produce products here in the United
19 States.

20 I think that that is going to continue to be a
21 major focus. If we can't do anything on the import side of
22 things, I think maintaining and expanding upon the export
23 market opportunities that we have is going to be very, very
24 important for our industry moving forward.

25 COMMISSIONER JOHANSON: Thank you, Ms. Carranza.

1 Now, we have someone online, Dean Showers.

2 MR. SHOWERS: Hi, everybody. Thank you for giving
3 me the opportunity to speak. Dean Showers with the Alliance
4 for American Manufacturing.

5 I just want to say that our trade policy is very
6 important to not only the farm community who depends on a lot
7 of exports, but it's also policy that needs to take into
8 account America's manufacturing base. American's
9 manufacturing base are the bedrock of America's security and
10 economic ability to compete in the world, and too many times
11 our trade policies hit those industries against each other,
12 those that need to make things here, and those that are
13 exporting like a lot of our goods that are produced by the
14 farm community.

15 So, I would say that I come from a manufacturing
16 background. Manufacturing jobs over the last 20 years have
17 been decimated by our trade policies, and one of the reasons
18 I think is the blame for that is we haven't really put
19 together a strategy for national manufacturing policy, and
20 without putting a concrete strategy together that takes into
21 account that we all need to trade goods and services, but our
22 trade policies also need to recognize that not every country
23 that we trade with are competing on a fair basis.

24 So, trade policy isn't like a one size fits all; it
25 needs to be carefully crafted. And when I say carefully

1 crafted, I think it needs to really set the rules, and they
2 need to be followed. We can't just have a trade policy, and
3 then not enforce the rules.

4 COMMISSIONER JOHANSON: Thank you, Mr. Showers, for
5 your comments. We have someone else on the line, Niaz Dorry.

6 MS. DORRY: Yes, hi. Thank you for having me
7 representing the National Family Farm Coalition, and the
8 North American Mining (phonetic) Alliance. I do represent
9 two organizations. One works with family farmers, ranchers,
10 and growers, and the other with fishing communities across
11 North America.

12 And I have to agree with the comment that this is
13 an issue that's much more nuanced than black and white. Even
14 though this Commission is a nonpartisan one, what we're
15 learning more and more is that decisions around trade are
16 often a partisan one, or is at least affected by what's
17 happening on the world stage, or an Administration's
18 relationship with another Administration. We're seeing some
19 of those impacts right now with the war that is happening in
20 Europe.

21 And, so, for us it's really important that trade
22 not be designed -- not be the tool that designs our food
23 system, but really some principles that are rooted in food
24 sovereignty should be what designs our trade policies, issues
25 around equity that's needed for food workers, infrastructure,

1 that is localized, and is enriching rural communities, as it
2 was said earlier. Community-based control of things that are
3 essential to growing, catching, and raising our food, whether
4 that's water, land, sea, it's fishing rights, fair prices.
5 We're seeing some issues right now around price with the
6 dairy trade agreements.

7 And, so, for us it's just really important to have
8 trade standards, trade policies that can transcend those
9 times when politics and political diplomacy end up dictating
10 our trade policies rather than our relationships with global
11 societies.

12 So, it is definitely a much more nuanced issue. It
13 affects our farmers, our family farmers across North America,
14 and our fishing communities and ranchers. On any given day
15 whether it's labor issues, or price issues, that are driven,
16 or dumping of products, it is affecting their ability to make
17 ends meet.

18 And, so, we encourage you to really look at trade
19 as a tool only when those very fundamentals of food
20 sovereignty are met. Thank you.

21 COMMISSIONER JOHANSON: Thank you, Ms. Niaz. Oh,
22 yes, Mr. Wiltschko.

23 MR. WILTSCHKO: Hi. Will Wiltschko with California
24 Trade Justice Coalition. Just a few things.

25 So, California is one of the hardest hit states in

1 the country when it comes to trade related job loss. We
2 released a report in 2020 showing that our state had the
3 second most workers certified for trade adjustment assistance
4 since NAFTA in the entire country, and that the number of
5 workers who qualified for TAA, meaning that their jobs had
6 either been directly offshored, or displaced by imports, was
7 on the rise in recent years, and trade related job loss
8 affected communities in all corners of the state.

9 Now, offshoring is obviously devastating for
10 workers, and working Californians of all races, ethnicities,
11 and genders, but like many things, it's hit black and Latino
12 communities particularly hard.

13 Now, first off, there's the job losses themselves.
14 Black and Latino workers are disproportionately represented
15 in many of the manufacturing sectors that have been hit the
16 hardest by import competition, including fabricated metals,
17 furniture, plastics, and rubber, paper, chemicals,
18 transportation equipment, and primary metals.

19 They are also disproportionately represented in
20 service sector jobs like call centers that are increasingly
21 subject to offshoring.

22 For the manufacturing jobs in particular, these
23 have often been a pathway to the middle class for many
24 families of color, and the loss of these jobs is devastating
25 not just on these families, but also on our communities at

1 large.

2 So, on average, black and Latino families have far
3 less accumulated wealth and savings than white households.
4 This means that even with unemployment insurance, and
5 programs like trade adjustment assistance, black and Latino
6 workers have a harder time facing long periods of
7 unemployment.

8 They also have a harder time moving on from one
9 community to another in search of work. This can force
10 people into accepting lower paying jobs than they had before
11 because, again, even with assistance, they don't really have
12 the money to train, or to move looking for a new profession.

13 People of color are often the last hired, and the
14 first fired, so that compounds the negative impacts of
15 offshoring too. In some communities the offshoring, or
16 displacement of large employers can have ripple effects
17 throughout the wider communities. Workers have less money to
18 spend at restaurants, and hair salons, and car dealers, and
19 other local businesses, so this starts hurting the community,
20 this devastates entire communities. Thank you.

21 COMMISSIONER JOHANSON: Thank you, Mr. Wiltschko.
22 Mr. Hamilton, and Ms. Rios, I believe that you had some
23 written comments you wanted to share today?

24 (Pause.)

25 MR. RIOS: Good afternoon. My name Aurora Rios,

1 and I appreciate the opportunity to be able to share with you
2 how international trade has impacted my community in Kerman,
3 and more specifically, how it impacts my job at MEC, M-E-C.

4 MEC is a small company that manufacturers mobile
5 elevating work platforms, also known as MEWPs, or we just
6 call them lifts. It has provided a strong and stable job for
7 me and my family, and helps support my community.

8 I started with MEC in 2013 as a level one assembler
9 in the electrical department. I had no experience, and MEC
10 allowed me to learn on-the-job. I was a single mother of
11 five kids living with my mother trying to make ends meet.

12 I started making electrical components for all the
13 lifts. My job included making upper and lower control boxes,
14 wiring harnesses, assembling panels, motors, and switches.
15 These components we produce are part of every lift. As we've
16 grown and imported more new models, the electrical components
17 have tied together for customer specific options.

18 The finished lifts that me and my team help make
19 are then shipped to customers all across America, and it's a
20 wonderful feeling seeing, you know, your lifts around town,
21 you know, your family sees them. It's a good feeling.

22 MEC has grown, and it's provided me with new and
23 better opportunities. I now supervise over 12 employees in
24 the subassembly department, which includes the electrical
25 department where I started. In this department we not only

1 prepare electrical components, but we also make the hydraulic
2 engines that go into the lifts.

3 With my promotion, I have been able to buy my own
4 home, buy and pay off my first car. Additionally, MEC has
5 not only allowed me and my immediate family to succeed, it's
6 helped the entire community to improve.

7 My family and I foster children who need temporary
8 homes, so from fostering we have been able to adopt and
9 provide a home for these children. So, with this we've been
10 given opportunities to grow and better our lives. We're
11 hoping that we can help these kids have better lives with
12 love, support, and the stability that they need. With the
13 stability of my job at MEC, I can give these kids a sense of
14 stability, and before that, I could not offer this without my
15 job at MEC.

16 Now, I understand that the ability of MEC to
17 continue, and grow, and support my community, is threatened
18 by these large 301 tariffs on the imported lifts. The 301
19 tariffs on our lifts are one of many imposed on imports from
20 China to try to force China to play fair. But checking
21 American workers from unfair imports from China makes sense,
22 but MEC can also receive an exception from these 301 tariffs
23 because people recognize that the 301 tariffs on the MEWPs,
24 our lifts, actually hurt manufacturers like MEC.

25 This exception expired over a year ago, and I don't

1 understand why this exception was taken away. All these 301
2 tariffs are doing is making the products my company, my
3 co-workers, and I less -- more competitive.

4 If we cannot manufacture lifts in Kerman, then the
5 ability of MEC to continue, and grow, and provide good jobs
6 to the community is at risk. So, I hope that you will
7 recommend that this exception be restored in order for trade
8 to continue to support jobs and families in our community.
9 Thank you.

10 COMMISSIONER JOHANSON: Thank you, Ms. Rios.

11 MR. HAMILTON: Good afternoon. My name is Leonard
12 Hamilton. Sorry. I am not a public speaker, but I was asked
13 to speak to the Committee regarding tariffs, and how it
14 affects my life. Since I do not public speak, I will read
15 you a statement.

16 First, let me tell you a little bit about myself.
17 I'm a married man, a father of two young adults, and
18 grandfather of two with one on the way. Before coming to MEC
19 in 2010, I was out of work of about four years. My family
20 was going through a tough time.

21 To better my chances at a good job to support my
22 family, I started taking classes at Fresno City for an A.A.
23 degree in welding. My uncle was a welder who I looked up to
24 as a father. Unfortunately, due to obligations with my
25 eldest son, I was unable to complete the final classes of the

1 welding degree program. Excuse me.

2 Due to not completing the program [technical
3 interference] welder, it was [technical interference]. It
4 gave me that opportunity I was looking for. In 2010 I was
5 given an opportunity to join MEC as a welder due to Fresno
6 County Welfare To Work Program. After the program ended, I
7 remained at MEC, and continued to grow my skills in the weld
8 department. My job involves reading blueprints, and
9 manufacturing parts needed to build our machines.

10 To build our speed level, and tighten lifts, this
11 involves operating equipments like Mig welders, drill
12 presses, and band saws. I see how international trade, which
13 supplies the key components to do my job, contributes to job
14 security. Without these parts from overseas, we would not be
15 able to manufacture these machines, and I would be left
16 unemployed.

17 My company is growing to the assistance of the
18 overseas partners, and produce parts for machines that are
19 affordable for the United States companies. Over a year now
20 the suspended MEC 301 tariffs on import aerial work platforms
21 has expired. 301 tariffs make products more expensive, which
22 makes it less affordable to consumers.

23 I ask you, why would the government want to make
24 the product we build at my company less competitive? I don't
25 have the answer for that question. At MEC we are trying to

1 grow jobs for our community, and be able to survive in a
2 competitive marketplace.

3 MEC has provided myself and my co-workers a good
4 paying job at our manufacturing plant in Kerman, California.
5 As an employee it is important to me and my co-workers that
6 you share how these tariffs impact us and our families with
7 others in the government. With the expiration and suspension
8 of the 301 tariffs, it would mean a loss of jobs to my
9 company, and possibly myself, to offset the loss of money due
10 to the 301 tariffs.

11 I thank you for your time and consideration, and
12 request extinguishing, or suspending the 301 tariffs.

13 COMMISSIONER JOHANSON: Thank you, Mr. Hamilton,
14 for your statement. Is anyone out there online? Would
15 anyone like to speak? I know we have a number of
16 participants who are participating virtually. Okay. Would
17 anyone like to follow up with any further comments on this
18 question? Okay. Then let's move onto another question. Oh,
19 I'm sorry. Yes, Mily Treviño-Sauceda?

20 MS. TREVIÑO-SAUCEDA: Yes. I'm not sure if I'm
21 following. Can you hear me?

22 COMMISSIONER JOHANSON: You're there, yes. We can
23 hear and see you just fine.

24 MS. TREVIÑO-SAUCEDA: Okay, thank you, thank you.
25 Actually, I'm in El Paso, Texas right now because of certain

1 reasons. Mily Treviño-Sauceda, I represent Alianza Nacional
2 de Campesinas, which is a national farmworker women
3 organization, and we are representing 20 different states of
4 farmworker women.

5 It's a little bit more than 700,000 women that we
6 represent, and I'd like to comment that trade, as what some
7 of the presenters right now have shared, has caused some
8 issues with workers. I'm representing workers, and it has
9 caused many, many issues, just in general -- not just
10 agriculture, any kind of industry that has the opportunity to
11 do trade in other countries.

12 Why? Because the majority of the companies that
13 have more fortune are able to trade or leave, and as they
14 leave to other countries, they leave workers displaced. And
15 at the same time, this country, I do want to share -- and I
16 always share in my presentations -- that this country has not
17 been reasonable and has not been fair and just with
18 agriculture workers, especially because when the Fair Labor
19 Standards Act was passed, it has a section that also says
20 that it's not including agricultural workers in terms of
21 having all the protections that any other worker would have
22 in this country.

23 So, this leaves a lot of space for exploitation,
24 abuse, all sorts of different kinds of issues. And if
25 anything, at the same time, when trade has been happening,

1 trade with other companies, outside companies -- you know,
2 with other countries, for example, the H2A program or H2B
3 program, we have found, and we have 15 organizations that we
4 represent that are part of the membership that are in the 20
5 different states that I'm talking about, one being
6 California, which California is the only state that has the
7 majority of the protections for farmworkers, but it's the
8 only one because of the work that many organizations have
9 done to provide and push for the protections that farmworkers
10 need, not only in California but need in the different
11 states.

12 Just to finish, I do want to share that, not only
13 because of trade but because of the lack of protections that
14 this country has had for agriculture workers, the wage theft
15 that is happening as we speak, the harassment and rape that
16 is happening as we speak, are so pervasive and so bad, and
17 it's not being taken care of at all.

18 And I just wanted to mention this, that as the
19 United States brings workers from outside in other countries,
20 many companies -- not all -- but many companies take
21 advantage and take away the visa from workers. And it's kind
22 of like another slave issue here. And at the same time, it's
23 -- slaves here already.

24 During 1938 when the Fair Labor Standards Act was
25 passed, it's our belief, and we strongly feel that the

1 Standards Act was only approved as long as most of whomever
2 was enslaved before, which was blacks, were not going to get
3 the same kind of treatment that any other worker.

4 At the same time, Latinos, which is black and brown
5 now, have inherited these kind of situations in this country
6 and will continue until the United States is more reasonable
7 and does justice. And if this Government does not take of
8 this situation, you will always have issues.

9 Many companies right now, I'm hearing -- which is
10 good for them -- many companies are saying that trade is
11 benefitting them, which is good, but then don't say that
12 increasing and providing the protections to workers is going
13 to harm their profits or it's going to harm their business.
14 I just wanted to -- I have many more things to say, but at
15 least I just wanted to share that part. Thank you.

16 COMMISSIONER JOHANSON: Thank you, Ms.
17 Treviño-Sauceda. Would anyone like to make any further
18 comments? And I'd just like to encourage you all to feel
19 free to comment on the statements of others, as well. The
20 purpose of being here is to try to engage in conversation.
21 So, if you agree or disagree with another participant, feel
22 free to let us know. Mr. Showers, who is participating
23 virtually, would like to speak now.

24 MR. SHOWERS: Yes, thank you. Real briefly, I'd
25 just like to follow up on, you know, when manufacturers are

1 dependent on getting the materials to assemble the products
2 that they're making here in the U.S., that is a real problem.

3 And I'd just like to point out that every time
4 there's a national crisis, a world crisis -- the pandemic has
5 been -- the only thing that came out of the pandemic that was
6 positive was that it exposed how vulnerable we are in our
7 supply chains.

8 And God forbid we get involved in a war or
9 something of that nature, our supply chains are very
10 vulnerable at this point. So, when you're crafting trade
11 policy -- and I really sympathize to the farm community
12 because many of those products are dependent on trade and
13 being exported -- but like I said in my earlier comments,
14 unless we have a pretty thoughtful trade policy that takes
15 into consideration the necessity to make things here and have
16 supply chains that are tight that we can depend on our
17 manufacturing base to get those parts that are needed to put
18 things together, we're going to be in a world of hurt.

19 And manufacturing provides multiple opportunities
20 for every race, gender -- anything covered by the EEOC. Most
21 of the time, it provides a very good middle class job for
22 many, many workers who, in turn, become the consumers for a
23 lot of the products that we're exporting.

24 So, it's really not a complicated process, but it
25 needs thoughtful policymaking, and it really needs to take

1 into consideration the necessity to protect our domestic
2 manufacturing base and start to tighten up supply chains that
3 are just so critical to putting together all of the things
4 that we want to make here in America.

5 COMMISSIONER JOHANSON: Thank you, Mr. Showers.
6 Would anyone else like to make comments, including responding
7 to the comments of other speakers? Okay, then with that,
8 let's move onto another question, which you all can feel free
9 to comment on.

10 Have Government policies related to international
11 trade, including the imports, exports, and foreign
12 investment, impacted workers in your community differently
13 depending upon their race and/or ethnicity? And are there
14 ways to make such policies better or more equitable?

15 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Can you read that one more
16 time?

17 COMMISSIONER JOHANSON: Yes. Have Government
18 policies relating to international trade, including imports,
19 exports, and foreign investment, impacted workers in your
20 community differently depending upon their race and/or
21 ethnicity? And are there ways to make such policies better
22 and more equitable?

23 I know we have one participant, Mily
24 Treviño-Sauceda, would like to speak. She's participating
25 virtually.

1 MS. TREVIÑO-SAUCEDA: Yes. I would just like to
2 add, is there a way that you can add in the question in terms
3 of sex also?

4 COMMISSIONER JOHANSON: Sure, yes, we can add sex,
5 yes.

6 MS. TREVIÑO-SAUCEDA: Okay. And the reason for
7 this is because even our organization has filed a lawsuit
8 against the Government, represented by Center for los
9 Derechos del Migrante, against the U.S. Government for
10 allowing, when H2A workers are hired, women are not
11 necessarily hired most of the time.

12 And what does that mean? How strong is a policy
13 about hiring women or not? And when they're hired -- if they
14 hire any -- they're put in positions or places where --
15 within this country. And I was sharing how pervasive the
16 issue of harassment and rape happens, how very little
17 security and safety for women in the workplace exists.

18 So, if policies are really going to support workers
19 and have a good relationship with companies that are hiring
20 workers from other countries, the best thing to do is to make
21 sure that there's monitoring happening, that there's
22 enforcement happening.

23 Because if you don't have that, then it leaves a
24 wide-open opportunity for companies, especially the
25 supervisors and crew leaders, to take advantage of workers,

1 in general. And I will go again and say it leaves open
2 situations of abuse.

3 And we have found that not only women have been
4 sexually harassed and raped but men also being sexually
5 harassed and raped. So, I just wanted to add this part in
6 terms of making sure that policies are written in a way that
7 all these other details are also included in terms of safety
8 and security and health for workers. Thank you.

9 COMMISSIONER JOHANSON: Thank you, Ms.
10 Treviño-Sauceda. Yes, Mr. Wiltschko?

11 MR. WILTSCHKO: Yeah, Will Wiltschko, California
12 Trade Justice Coalition. Trade adjustment assistance can
13 help workers, particularly young workers, train for a young
14 career when their first is destroyed because of direct
15 offshoring or displacement by imports.

16 We think that the TAA program should be expanded,
17 but it's far from a cure-all. Workers with less savings and
18 other accumulated wealth have a harder time taking advantage
19 of TAA than those with a lot of savings.

20 And obviously for a host of historical reasons,
21 Black and Latino families, on average, have a small fraction
22 of the savings that white families have. So, you know, we
23 think that TAA should be fully funded. It should provide for
24 things like child care so that parents can go to school,
25 there should be more moving expenses included, and it should

1 be expanded to cover all workers who lose their jobs to
2 trade, including service sector workers.

3 But at the end of the day, we need to invest more
4 in good-paying manufacturing jobs in black and brown
5 communities, and we need to stop signing trade deals that
6 offshore them in the first place. Thank you.

7 COMMISSIONER JOHANSON: Thank you, Mr. Wiltschko.
8 We have someone who would like to participate virtually.
9 Alicia Barker?

10 MS. BARKER: Hi, thank you very much. So, I am
11 also with the Trade Adjustment Assistance Program in the
12 state of Oregon, and I would like to piggyback off of what
13 Will said just earlier.

14 In regards to our current populations that we're
15 discovering are underserved in our territory for digital
16 inclusion, we've discovered that 50 percent of our Trade Act
17 participants are, in some form or fashion, one or more
18 underserved communities.

19 And we would like to also mention that funding
20 Trade Adjustment Assistance to help with things like digital
21 inclusion and making sure that there's viable technology
22 access for those that are looking for work and adversely
23 affected by trade, that that is funded.

24 In addition, in Oregon since COVID hit, it's been
25 discovered that 50 percent of our daycare providers closed

1 down. And while other things are reopening, the child care
2 avenue is still very limited, and workers are struggling to
3 find child care.

4 So, I would agree and concur that we should also
5 fund those types of programs to help people reenter the
6 workforce. Thank you.

7 COMMISSIONER JOHANSON: Thank you, Ms. Barker.
8 Yes, Ms. Carranza?

9 MS. CARRANZA: Yeah, I think that import pressure,
10 primarily speaking on behalf of the olive industry, has
11 impacted all of our growers. But I think specifically the
12 growers that face the hardest hits as a result of some of the
13 import pressure that we see are in underserved and minority
14 communities.

15 And unfortunately when the increase of Spanish
16 olive imports happened here in California and foreign
17 investment occurred with one of our domestic packers, a lot
18 of these small, minority, underserved growers unfortunately
19 lost their entire operations.

20 So, I think that, you know, while it is important
21 to obviously focus on, you know, the entire industry, I do
22 think that some of those growers that are in those smaller
23 communities were definitely more heavily impacted.

24 And I think just providing an opportunity for them
25 to compete on a level playing field here domestically, just

1 to be able to operate their farms and to keep their
2 occupations and their family's tradition going I think is
3 very important and something that I really think would
4 benefit our industry.

5 COMMISSIONER JOHANSON: Thank you, Ms. Carranza,
6 and since we all have masks on, it's sometimes hard to hear.
7 You mentioned olives in particular? Is that the commodity?

8 MS. CARRANZA: Yes, table olives, not olive oil.

9 COMMISSIONER JOHANSON: Okay, thank you, Ms.
10 Carranza. And we have a participant who'd like to pose a
11 response virtually, and that is Antonio Tovar.

12 MR. TOVAR: Yeah, my name is Antonio Tovar. I'm
13 also coming from the National Family Farm Coalition, and
14 pretty much what the --

15 MR. BISHOP: Can you hold your microphone a little
16 bit closer to your mouth, Antonio, please?

17 MR. TOVAR: Yeah, I'm sorry. Similar to what was
18 expressed before, precisely about sometimes commerce has been
19 affected -- it especially affects small farmers, family
20 famers, which really can't compete with the dumping or also
21 with the consolidation of farming, usually are the ones that
22 are more affected on commerce. Thank you.

23 COMMISSIONER JOHANSON: Thank you, Mr. Tovar. Does
24 anyone else have comments? Would anyone like to respond to
25 what other have said so far? Okay, then I'm going to move

1 onto something else.

2 Are there Government policies that are successful
3 in reducing negative impacts from international trade, and
4 alternatively, are there Government policies that help
5 workers take advantage of trade-related opportunities,
6 including exports? Are there areas in which more or better
7 resources are needed with regard to these Government
8 policies? Mr. Creamer?

9 MR. CREAMER: Yes, Casey Creamer, California Citrus
10 Mutual. I'll just point to one significant Government
11 policy, and that is the Farm Bill. The Farm Bill provides
12 support to farmers and communities around the country,
13 nutrition assistance to consumers across the country as well,
14 and that helps the domestic supply significantly.

15 It helps in our industry in tackling, you know,
16 invasive pests and diseases that are significantly
17 threatening the industry's ability to continue to produce and
18 then support jobs and the economies in these rural
19 communities.

20 So, the Farm Bill is absolutely a necessary
21 component of protecting United States agriculture from
22 potential trade impacts. And, you know, in the future
23 there's more farm bill discussions that need to happen.
24 Traditionally, farm bill discussions have been centered
25 around, sort of, Midwest-based commodities, and only in the

1 last couple has there really been a focus on the specialty
2 crops, you know, that are predominantly grown in California
3 and a lot of the healthy fruits and vegetables that really
4 are key components to, you know, advancing our lifestyles
5 even more.

6 But it's got to continue to adapt to support the
7 changing environment. It's a whole lot more difficult -- and
8 you'll probably hear this -- it's much easier to have this
9 type of a hearing in the Midwest where there's only a few
10 commodities than here in California because it's incredibly
11 nuanced just between all of the commodities and, you know,
12 what Elizabeth talked about in table olives versus, you know,
13 olive oil.

14 It's incredibly diverse, and so we need a Farm Bill
15 and we need Government policy that supports our domestic
16 industry first, and the base of that is agriculture. As we
17 saw in COVID when grocery stores were empty, we cannot rely
18 on other countries for our food supply. That is just an
19 absolute base.

20 There is no other economy or other sector that can
21 survive without first satisfying the food supply question,
22 and so everything else is built upon that. And so, continued
23 Farm Bill policy and other things that help domestic
24 agriculture be successful are absolutely essential to be
25 continued and to be adapted and modified to meet the changing

1 needs moving forward. Thank you.

2 COMMISSIONER JOHANSON: Thank you, Mr. Creamer.
3 Anyone else? Are there any other Government programs that
4 you believe do impact international trade and workers here in
5 this part of California? Yes, Ms. Carranza?

6 MS. CARRANZA: Yeah, I would say, on the export
7 side of things, the programs, Market Access Program, the
8 Emerging Market Promotion Program, Technical Assistance for
9 Specialty Crops Program, I think all of those programs, that
10 help bolster international trade are really utilized in our
11 industries and are really beneficial, especially to smaller
12 growers and processors that may not have the means to have
13 their own international marketing campaigns and materials.

14 So, I think it really helps to have that generic
15 promotion of United States and California agriculture to help
16 benefit some of those growers and processors as well.

17 COMMISSIONER JOHANSON: Thank you, Ms. Carranza.
18 Would anyone else like to comment on Government programs
19 impacting international trade, including people that are
20 participating virtually?

21 Okay, then let's move onto something else. Oh, I'm
22 sorry, there is someone else. This is the first time, by the
23 way, for us to operate a virtual hearing, and I'm surprised
24 that it's actually kind of working. So, thanks everybody for
25 being patient with us. All right, Mr. Dean Showers would

1 like to comment.

2 MR. SHOWERS: Yes, I'd just like to say that we
3 encourage the USTR to use every tool in the toolbox to
4 protect U.S. interests, both in agriculture and
5 manufacturing, when it comes to trade.

6 I'd just like to point out that, you know, one of
7 the tools in the toolbox which was talked about are tariffs.
8 And I'm not saying that tariffs are always the do-all to make
9 things right, but tariffs are an important tool in the
10 toolbox when it comes to combating unfair trade practices.

11 And I'd like to point out the steel industry -- the
12 domestic steel industry was on a slow path to demise. Nobody
13 can really predict where the steel industry would be today
14 without the impact of the 232 tariffs that were imposed on
15 steel and aluminum.

16 Basically, those tariffs were imposed to combat
17 subsidized, cheap steel coming from China that was kind of
18 starting to come in from -- over 17 other companies were
19 exporting Chinese steel into the U.S. marketplace, which was
20 driving the price of steel down and aluminum down to the
21 point where U.S. manufacturers could not survive too much
22 longer without that kind of relief.

23 And so, I encourage, you know, all the tools in the
24 toolbox. When we have trade rules and laws on the books, the
25 U.S. Government, through the USTR and Department of Commerce

1 and everybody else, they need to enforce those rules.

2 And another policy that is a great success is "Buy
3 America" policy when the Government spends our tax dollars.
4 It's not only the right thing to do, it's got bi-partisan
5 support. The support is upwards of 80 percent of the
6 population support having their tax dollars spent on U.S.
7 products made by U.S. workers that give workers an
8 opportunity to have successful and sustainable incomes.
9 Thank you.

10 COMMISSIONER JOHANSON: Thank you, Mr. Showers.
11 Yes, Mr. Creamer?

12 MR. CREAMER: Yeah, I'd just like to add a couple
13 more policies, in particular the Families to Food Box Program
14 that was put into place with COVID. It really took off some
15 of the excess supplies that we're seeing and were
16 significantly impacting the economics of the situation.

17 There was a crisis situation in the Families to
18 Food Box, really helped that situation, and also brought food
19 to people and fresh commodities to people that, you know,
20 normally wouldn't get that kind of produce. And so, that was
21 a very important program, and the other important program was
22 the Sec. 32, additional Government buys, with the China trade
23 situation that happened and the tariffs back and forth.

24 Those Sec. 32s were incredibly helpful in
25 stabilizing the market and the California citrus industry and

1 many other Ag Sectors. And those type of things, you know,
2 should be continue to be utilized and tweaked and potentially
3 expanded to help support domestic producers.

4 COMMISSIONER JOHANSON: Mr. Creamer, could you
5 follow up? We are not very familiar with those policies, the
6 Families and Food Box and the Sec. 32s. Could you describe a
7 bit more exactly how they work?

8 MR. CREAMER: They were administered by U.S.
9 Department of Agriculture, I think it was -- my colleagues
10 can probably help me a bit more if I mistakenly talk about
11 where the funding source came -- but really I think it was
12 the Coronavirus finding that came forward, and it was USDA
13 that went out and worked with food banks across the country
14 to set up distribution channels and put mixed fruit, produce
15 boxes, meat boxes, dairy boxes together, and really make the
16 distribution a whole lot easier versus the traditional-type
17 programs where you get bulk commodities and it typically has
18 to go through other distributions chains.

19 So, it was really from the grower to, sort of, a
20 collecting agency to put the boxes together and really
21 streamline the process and really put a lot of food into
22 hands of needy people. So, that's one.

23 The Sec. 32 is, again, another USDA program
24 administered by AMS, Agricultural Marketing Service, and
25 they've got authority to make additional purchases similarly

1 to school lunch programs -- I think maybe FNS -- and also to
2 food banks and others.

3 And so, it basically takes off bulk commodities.
4 There's a bidding system that happens, and the Government
5 purchases it and then distributes it to food banks and
6 others.

7 COMMISSIONER JOHANSON: Thank you, Mr. Creamer.
8 Mr. Lemay?

9 MR. LEMAY: So, Ian Lemay with the California Fresh
10 Fruit Association, and just to echo comments made by my
11 peers, one, the Farm Bill has been significantly important in
12 its utilization by the industry to sustain and expand foreign
13 markets.

14 To Mr. Creamer's comments, over the last, you know,
15 four years, first with the market facilitation program, which
16 was to assist domestic producers related to market loss
17 during the China trade dispute, those were commodity-credit
18 corporation dollars -- CCC dollars -- that were utilized. It
19 helped sustain us through at least the immediate portion of
20 the China trade dispute, although I will note that USDA has
21 come out with some data recently saying we have seen --
22 especially after the phase one China trade deal -- that U.S.
23 agriculture exports to China have rebounded.

24 For my commodities that I represent, that is
25 nothing further than the truth. China is still viewed very

1 much as a dead market, and unfortunately, many of the
2 mitigating programs, like I said, in the immediacy of that
3 dispute, have expired.

4 And so, we ostensibly, what used to be a top-three
5 viable market for many of my commodities is dead. Through
6 the Coronavirus response, I would again echo that it was a
7 net positive to help growers through the Farmers to Families
8 to Food Box Program, which were, again, CSS dollars utilized
9 to package produce boxes and other forms of subsistence boxes
10 to distribute throughout the United States.

11 It again helped growers in a time of need, and
12 while the commodities I represent have not had extensive
13 experience with Sec. 32 purchases, again as we find ourselves
14 especially in a disrupted supply chain to move many of our
15 products out of the United States and into foreign markets,
16 the Sec. 32 program continues to be looked at as a viable
17 option to sustain, in the short-term, the domestic growers.

18 COMMISSIONER JOHANSON: Thank you, Mr. Lemay. And
19 Antonio Tovar also wanted to speak. I don't know if he's
20 still wants to talk?

21 MR. TOVAR: No, it was already said about
22 incentives to buy locally. I think that that's a policy that
23 is very important for farmers in terms of have access to the
24 local market. That's another policy that incentivizes
25 farmers, especially small farmers.

1 COMMISSIONER JOHANSON: Could you speak on some of
2 those programs, perhaps?

3 MR. TOVAR: Well, during the pandemic, something
4 that was addressed, and it was already said, was the food
5 boxes. Unfortunately, in many cases, they were destined for
6 larger producers, not necessarily smaller producers, which is
7 the community that we represent, are smaller producers.

8 COMMISSIONER JOHANSON: All right, thank you, Mr.
9 Tovar. Would anyone else like to comment in response to this
10 question? Mr. Lemay?

11 MR. LEMAY: Yes, I would just like to go back to
12 the Farm Bill, and we're about to head into the
13 reauthorization period of it, and I do think the challenge of
14 our time will be -- for the last few Farm Bills it's been
15 either a baseline or a budgetary cut period for the Farm
16 Bill.

17 And I think as we see an adapting climate, adapting
18 pressures globally, on U.S.-based growers, the challenge will
19 be for the Farm Bill to meet the moment and potentially a
20 need for that to expand its utilization so that domestic
21 growers can meet the demand here in the United States but
22 also through global demand as well of our product.

23 COMMISSIONER JOHANSON: Thank you, Mr. Lemay.
24 Alicia Barker would like to comment?

25 MS. BARKER: Yes, thank you. So, my comment is

1 two-fold, one to speak to Oregon's current logging industry.
2 What happens is, China will pay top-dollar for our logs, and
3 we ship out the raw materials to them, and then, in-turn,
4 they sell them back to us at a higher profit. This keeps
5 U.S. companies from competing, both in attainment of raw
6 goods and in production and selling of these finished
7 products.

8 In addition, when foreign-owned companies make
9 decisions to raise production in their home country or cut
10 production in the U.S., it can also have impact on the
11 industry and the community. It allows for manipulation of
12 the markets that's not necessarily in the best interest of
13 the U.S.

14 This happens by shifting prices, underselling, and
15 flooding markets, and in addition, these companies often hire
16 staff from their home countries to work in U.S. sites where
17 there are already skilled laborers that can fit that bill.
18 That would be something that we would like to see stringent
19 policy around to make sure that we harness those types of
20 practices to benefit the domestic worker.

21 In addition, we are noticing an uptick in the local
22 farms being purchased by Japan. We'd like to see maybe
23 something in the policy regarding trade for farmworkers.

24 COMMISSIONER JOHANSON: All right. Thank you, Ms.
25 Barker. Also, Ms. Mily Treviño-Sauceda would like to

1 comment.

2 MS. TREVIÑO-SAUCEDA: Yes -- I'm sorry, I have the
3 phone ringing at the same time. I'd like to add a little bit
4 more in terms of the Farm Bill. The Farm Bill has been very,
5 very important for the United States, especially the program
6 that talks about the 25.01. This program, which is under the
7 USDA, provides the opportunity for anyone that wants to
8 become a farmer -- for beginning farmers.

9 I just wanted to bring up how important that
10 program is. Why? Because we have seen, throughout the years
11 -- I come from a family farm, and my parents were from
12 Mexico. And my ancestors had farms, and as my parents came
13 to the United States and some of us were of course born over
14 here, they brought with them all these skills, this
15 knowledge, but they didn't understand is how to work the
16 system and how to work the rules, the regulations, et cetera.

17 And these kinds of programs are very good to
18 prepare anyone who wants to become a small farmer and build
19 their business. And I go along in terms of what has been
20 said, how important it is for small business to be supported
21 and protected here in the United States because, the majority
22 of the time, small businesses are the first ones to break or
23 close when situations like the pandemic happened.

24 And for the same reason, the Farm Bill has provided
25 other programs, which includes, under USDA, their Rural

1 Development Program and other programs that are very good to
2 many socially disadvantaged farmers. So, I just wanted to
3 add that. Thank you.

4 COMMISSIONER JOHANSON: Thank you, Ms.
5 Treviño-Sauceda. The next person that would like to speak is
6 Niaz Dorry, but Ms. Dorry, I was wondering if you could hold
7 your comments for about 10 minutes while we take a little
8 break? We've been going for over an hour. So, if we could
9 have you first up when we come back in 10 minutes, if that's
10 okay with you?

11 MR. DORRY: That's fine with me. My dog will even
12 appreciate that.

13 COMMISSIONER JOHANSON: All right. I will too, to
14 be honest with you. Okay. So, let's come back in 10
15 minutes, okay? And thank you all for your comments so far.
16 It's been very interesting.

17 (Whereupon, a brief recess was taken.)

18 COMMISSIONER JOHANSON: Concerning the last
19 question that was raised right before we left, and that
20 question dealt with Government policies impacting
21 international trade. Go right ahead.

22 MR. DORRY: Thanks for coming back to me. There
23 were a number of issues that was talked about during the last
24 session that I wanted to touch on, and I'll try to do it as
25 succinctly as possible.

1 One was the food boxes and the policy around those
2 that many of our member groups -- so, just to give us a sense
3 of who we represent, we have members across 44 states, and
4 one of those member groups is the Federation of South
5 Cooperatives that has membership across all Southern states.

6 The food box policy was a really important policy
7 them but also for our members in Missouri Rural Crisis Center
8 or Community Food Coalition in Kentucky and other places, not
9 only because they were able to get real food versus what I
10 call "unidentified food objects" to people who actually
11 needed them, but it did something really important.

12 It's reconnected people to the source of food.
13 That community element that I think we often forget when we
14 talk about trade of commodities in such a sterile fashion
15 that we forget that this is the most basic human need, and
16 those farmers -- or fishermen in our case as well -- that are
17 putting food on peoples' tables have been absent from their
18 tables for a very long time.

19 And so, this community food boxes was reconnecting
20 people, where we hear from fishermen and farmers across our
21 member states was that it brought them a sense of
22 connectivity and alignment again with the people who actually
23 eat their food. And that is a sense of appreciation they
24 don't often get in the global commodities market.

25 It goes beyond fair prices, which they also need.

1 It goes toward that connectivity that they, I guess, crave,
2 and they didn't really know it until these isolations we've
3 been experiencing. And so, even though it's easy to think
4 about those food boxes as a way to bridge this pandemic
5 period, that should be the way we function, to bring food to
6 people within their communities and reconnect us to the
7 source of our food.

8 The second piece that was brought up by the person
9 in Oregon that talked about logging, the example of logging
10 and essentially the raw material that is exported and then
11 brought back into this country through imports and through
12 trade policies.

13 As I mentioned earlier, one of my hats is working
14 with fishermen, and fishing and logging probably have a lot
15 more in common than I thought because that's exactly what
16 occurs within the seafood sector, where fishermen within our
17 200-mile exclusive economic zone are catching the fish, the
18 fish is exported, and then brought back here, yet they are
19 not reaping the benefits economically.

20 And what we found was the instability of the trade
21 market really came home to roost with the pandemic for the
22 seafood sector, and the case in point would be the state of
23 Rhode Island. Suddenly, the entire seafood sector shut down,
24 and what the fishing community had been advocating for for
25 years was to rebuild infrastructure, bring jobs back to the

1 community. They had to do it under the guise of the
2 pandemic, and now they're able to actually reap the benefits
3 of what the pandemic brought them.

4 And I hope we do more of that, as we're rebuilding
5 some systems, to address the gaps the pandemic has left in
6 our food system. I hope we don't dismantle them because we
7 somehow want to think that trade brings much more certainty
8 than it actually does.

9 And then the final thing I wanted to say, I was
10 really glad to see the voices of Ms. Treviño-Salseda, for
11 example, talking about farmwomen, workers. Our membership
12 stands in solidarity with farmworkers and their needs to be
13 addressed, and of course the people of color the Farm Justice
14 Community people spoke about.

15 I think it's also important when we talk about
16 trade to realize those same disproportionately disadvantaged
17 people exist in the other countries, and one of the reasons
18 why some of our trade policies is favored is because we can
19 take advantage of cheap labor and exploitation of people over
20 there, the same kind of exploitation that we heard about
21 that's happening over here.

22 And so, I want to caution us to not be xenophobic
23 in this moment and not think about everybody that's over
24 there is somehow taking advantage of our trade policies
25 because, in many cases, those workers are experiencing much

1 more grave conditions than some of our workers -- not to
2 undermine or underestimate what is happening to our workers
3 here.

4 So, ultimately for us, trade is the equivalent of
5 putting our own mask on first. You know, we need to feed our
6 communities and concentric circles, and if there is anything
7 left, we build trade policies to feed that into the global
8 economies of scale, not the other way around.

9 COMMISSIONER JOHANSON: Thank you, Ms. Dorry. Does
10 anybody else have any comments to follow up on that last line
11 of statements? Okay. If not, let's move onto something
12 else. In your opinion, how important are imports, exports,
13 and foreign investment compared to other factors driving
14 employment, wages, and working conditions for your
15 communities?

16 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: Can you repeat the question?

17 COMMISSIONER JOHANSON: I will repeat it. In your
18 opinion, how important are imports, exports, and foreign
19 investments compared to other factors driving employment,
20 wages, and working conditions for your communities? In other
21 words, in your communities, how much is trade driving issues
22 as opposed to other factors in the economy? Ms. Carranza?

23 MS. CARRANZA: So I know I mentioned it earlier,
24 but in the olive industry, I think that trade has resulted in
25 the most significant impacts in our industry, as opposed to

1 some of the other problems that we deal with domestically.

2 Just for a little bit of context, in the table
3 olive industry, it was about 2017, one of our processors sold
4 a pretty significant amount of their shares to a foreign
5 company who also so happens to be one of the largest
6 importers of table olives to the United States.

7 As a result of that, we were successful in
8 obtaining antidumping and countervailing duties to help
9 protect some of our domestic supply from what was happening
10 -- with dumping, essentially -- to the United States.

11 And as a result of this merger with this foreign
12 company, 90 percent of the domestic growers from that company
13 lost their contracts overnight. And so, I think that just
14 goes to show the impact that trade has on growers, and a lot
15 of these growers, as I mentioned earlier, are from small,
16 underdeveloped communities who this is their main source of
17 income and these farms have been in their families for many,
18 many generations.

19 And so, to lose that overnight was really
20 devastating to the industry. So, I think that's just an
21 example of the impacts that, you know, trade can have on
22 domestic producers here in the state of California.

23 COMMISSIONER JOHANSON: Thank you, Ms. Carranza.
24 Mr. Creamer?

25 MR. CREAMER: Trade's incredibly important, and

1 it's a key factor. You have to have markets first before
2 anything else, and that really supports the entire supply
3 chain and everything underneath.

4 But let me just add another very, very important
5 factor, and that is the cost of production. You know, when
6 it comes down to trade, you know, free and fair trade, but
7 here in the United States, and probably especially in
8 California, it's the cost of production that's hurting a lot
9 of growers.

10 The cost has skyrocketed. The citrus industry did
11 a survey on navel oranges, just pre-pandemic, and roughly the
12 cost to grow and produce -- and not even counting the
13 harvesting and packing and getting to market -- was roughly
14 \$3300 an acre, significantly higher than what it was just 10
15 years prior.

16 And then when you add in the drought that we're
17 currently in and the transportation and everything else
18 related to COVID, just two years later we redid the survey,
19 and costs were \$3900 an acre. And so, you know, unless we're
20 getting more money for our product, the growers and farming
21 does not have the margins to support that.

22 And so, when you're in a permanent crop like
23 citrus, you're basically going in the hole and just hoping
24 and praying that the market recovers in the future or there's
25 more water supply in the next year. And so, it's really a

1 death of a thousand cuts.

2 I don't want to pit, you know, any -- we've got a
3 lot of environmental protection that's good, and we need to
4 do it. We've got a lot of employee health and safety, and we
5 need to continue to do that. We have to first protect our
6 people and we care about our people, and anybody who is not
7 protecting their people needs to be dealt with because that
8 just brings down the entire industry.

9 But we have to do things in a very cost-effective
10 manner. Growers are problem-solvers. And so, a lot of
11 times, the Government gets involved and when you don't
12 involve growers in that solution set or the broader
13 agriculture community, you end up laying regulation after
14 regulation that doesn't really actually meet the needs.

15 And so, we've got ourselves into a situation where
16 just rising costs with no solutions, very little Government
17 support, and the only options for these growers -- and a lot
18 of them are smaller growers -- do they sell to a bigger one
19 who can spread out the costs a little bit more and hire
20 people to handle all the compliance issues or take more
21 financial risk.

22 And so, we've seen that in our communities, the
23 size of a citrus grower is continuing to get larger. I'm not
24 going to make value judgments on, you know, big or small, but
25 that's the reality the Government policy has been

1 influencing, and it's just getting more and more costly.

2 And so, when you talk about fair trade, those same
3 rules and regulations are not in place, and so we're
4 basically, you know, adopting new policies here and then
5 ignoring it overseas and bringing it in and directly hurting
6 those producers.

7 So, we need to do something in the United States,
8 and especially in California, about finding ways to control
9 the cost of production because it doesn't necessarily just
10 hurt the growers, it hurts consumers and affordability. So,
11 thank you.

12 COMMISSIONER JOHANSON: Thank you, Mr. Creamer.
13 Mr. Lemay?

14 MR. LEMAY: Yes, just want to follow up on Mr.
15 Creamer's comments and support them. And actually, I can
16 supply this article. It's an op-ed I authored recently for
17 the California Stonefruit Industry with regards to -- I think
18 the question is, is that all the compounding elements are
19 making it hard to compete and sustain business within the
20 U.S. space.

21 And so, for California Stonefruit, just in the last
22 three years, we've had a 33 percent increase in labor costs.
23 That's eight percent, 13 percent, and 12 percent,
24 respectively. We've seen a 100 percent increase in shipping
25 costs over the last two years. Costs of pallets are up 50

1 percent, packaging 20 percent, and sea freight up to 50
2 percent.

3 For California Stonefruit growers right now,
4 they've seen the equivalent of \$7.55 per box, or \$0.42 per
5 pound since 2019. That's how much their costs have
6 increased. Price at the retail space has only increased by
7 \$2.88 per box or \$0.16 per pound. That's a \$0.26 cents per
8 pound difference in cost to what they're getting in the
9 retail space.

10 And so, these are costs that are associated with
11 doing their business, but the price they're getting for their
12 goods are not equaling it. And that I think it, whether it's
13 exports, imports, or just putting a piece of fruit on the
14 table, those compounding elements are making it quite
15 difficult to sustain ourselves into the future.

16 COMMISSIONER JOHANSON: Mr. Lemay, just to follow
17 up on that, how is that impacting employment in the region,
18 the factors you just named?

19 MR. LEMAY: Long-term it could have significant
20 impacts, especially if you take into consideration, at least
21 regionally here, some of the environmental impacts associated
22 with drought. We can see a full-fledged reduction in
23 production of our commodity sector.

24 And so, if we are not growing the fruits that we
25 are currently growing because of the host of pressures on the

1 industry, then there are no jobs. We saw recently -- again,
2 this is not a drought-related hearing -- but UC-Davis and
3 UC-Merced recently put out a study on the 2021 drought in
4 California where upwards of 385,000 acres were fowled,
5 leading to \$1.5 billion worth of farms being lost (phonetic),
6 and I believe 8400 jobs lost.

7 We have some other studies that point to, as
8 reduction of water availability comes out, tens of thousands
9 of jobs could be lost in the agriculture sector over the next
10 10 to 15 years. And so, if our businesses cannot sustain
11 themselves, compete on a global and domestic market, then
12 that of course will affect our employees.

13 COMMISSIONER JOHANSON: Thank you, Mr. Lane. And
14 you mentioned you'd written an article; feel free to give
15 that to our staff. And to any participants out there, either
16 here in the building or virtual, if you have any written
17 materials you'd like for us to see, please feel free to send
18 them to our staff for consideration in our investigation.

19 We have another participating, Mr. Herrera, who is
20 participating virtually?

21 MR. HERRERA: Hi, good afternoon. I apologize in
22 advance for the background noise from my little co-workers
23 here in my home office. I don't know if this is the
24 applicable part of the conversation to drop these two
25 comments in with relationship to exports.

1 In the previous role I had at CSU-Fresno, we
2 commissioned a study to assess the strength of the food and
3 beverage manufacturing industry, the value-added component of
4 the supply chain.

5 And at that point in time, we had found that there
6 was a considerable amount of leakage that was making its way
7 out of California, certainly leaving the shores of the United
8 States to primarily eastern Pacific Rim countries, eastern
9 Asia.

10 I would invite the commission to take a look at the
11 opportunities to re-shore some of those value-added jobs to
12 places like California, and specifically the San Joaquin
13 valley, where you have the production agriculture, you know,
14 providing ample supply for those value-added ventures.

15 I think with additional investments and
16 infrastructure you could re-shore some of those jobs back to
17 California, back to the United States. You know, we could
18 chop, dice, and do anything else to the almond here in the
19 San Joaquin valley that gets done abroad.

20 The study that I'll share with staff revealed the
21 opportunities not just for businesses but also for employees.
22 Those jobs provide an opportunity to move up the employment
23 ladder, with higher paying positions and value-added
24 production that pay more competitive wages than production
25 agriculture.

1 And then the only other thing with regards to trade
2 as, you know, our industries try to maintain their
3 competitiveness abroad on the global market, you know, I
4 would invite the commission to look at the effects that
5 automation and technology have on the workforce here in the
6 United States. We certainly are aware of displacement that
7 happens to folks in different levels of the supply chain when
8 automation, robotics come into play and, you know, help
9 reduce the overhead costs.

10 But it does create some displacement issues that
11 should be accounted for. I think we could be more proactive
12 in creating transitional opportunities for folks resulting
13 from displacement of technology. And so, that would be
14 another consideration to consider. Thank you for your time.
15 I appreciate the opportunity to contribute here today.

16 COMMISSIONER JOHANSON: Thank you, Mr. Herrera, and
17 again, if you want to submit any written materials, please
18 feel free to do so. Dr. Asci?

19 DR. ASCI: Serhat Asci. I'm a professor in
20 California State University of Fresno. So, when it comes to
21 your question, as an opinion, and also based on my research,
22 imports and exports both creates jobs and employment in the
23 valley.

24 Because, when we look at exports, exports are
25 really important for our producers. They are, kind of,

1 hedging their risk, or I could say, a kind of insurance, if
2 price fluctuates in the domestic market.

3 And it's a great opportunity for them to, kind of,
4 protect themselves. But when we look at the food supply
5 chain, imports also keep the jobs of their farm sustainable,
6 which is really important to keep also imports because we are
7 seasonally producing some products.

8 But protecting also small farmers, in my opinion,
9 is very crucial because when we look at the United States --
10 and I will talk about specialty crops -- our consumers do not
11 consume recommended amount of fruits and vegetables. And
12 California's the main production area, but still we are not
13 producing enough to feed all our nation.

14 Almost 50 percent of fruits and vegetables are
15 imported, which comes to our production in California. It is
16 kind of hard to create new land and produce more fruits and
17 vegetables. But as employment, I see what needs to be done
18 in terms of policy and trade policies.

19 I think most USDA policies, they help for market
20 access or insurance. But also, there should be more, maybe,
21 support in technology co-developments, like AI robotics if
22 they come into play, which will help our producers to reduce
23 their cost and be more competitive in changing the dynamics
24 of the food supply chain.

25 COMMISSIONER JOHANSON: Thank you, Dr. Ashi. And

1 you mentioned most Americans don't eat their recommended
2 amounts of fruits and vegetables -- well, I definitely buck
3 that trends. So, I think you all should know I consume your
4 products, like, all the time. Mr. Wiltschko?

5 MR. WILTSCHKO: Yeah, so, I just wanted to say that
6 bad trade policies are a driving factor in inequality in the
7 United States. The offshoring associated with the free trade
8 agreements like NAFTA and, you know, other things like
9 China's entry into the WTO have put real downward pressure on
10 the wages and benefits of the jobs that are left.

11 You know, this hurts working people across the
12 board with communities of color hit hardest. And, you know,
13 I've personally worked in other states. I've spent time in
14 Virginia, and I've seen communities that have been devastated
15 by offshoring and communities where, you know, you had folks
16 who had -- you know, I was in Martinsville, Virginia at one
17 point, and I know this is California, but, you know, this is
18 something that I'll never forget, how I had someone talk to
19 me about how great his community used to be before all these
20 jobs were offshored.

21 And a lot of folks didn't have opportunities to
22 switch to different careers and, you know, they'd been
23 working these jobs that could feed and support their
24 families, that could support, you know, children going to
25 college and could support, you know, buying a house.

1 And this guy who's 6'5", he was telling me this
2 story about his town, and he was tearing up about it. And I
3 still remember how I Googled that town right after that, and
4 the first article was "Third-world in the United States,
5 Martinsville, Virginia."

6 And, you know, there are so many towns, there are
7 so many places that have been devastated because of trade
8 policies that didn't factor in these things -- they didn't
9 factor-in these communities. And I'll definitely send over a
10 report on job losses in California specifically, and I'll
11 share that with your team. Thank you.

12 COMMISSIONER JOHANSON: Thank you, Mr. Wiltschko.
13 And participating virtually, Alicia Barker would like to
14 speak.

15 MS. BARKER: Thank you very much. So, we are
16 seeing more and more foreign investment in our companies like
17 steel. This creates a situation where they control
18 production, and any impact they create within the U.S. to
19 that industry is not viewed necessary as a trade impact, as
20 production is occurring here.

21 We need to look at ownership of companies across
22 our nation and have a safety net, such as TAA for workers, a
23 program to protect them. Including the TAA for workers
24 reauthorization, the ability to look at foreign investment to
25 our companies here and the impact they create in our own

1 nation.

2 Oregon has a steel company that has seen multiple
3 certifications via ITC decisions. Now, Russia holds interest
4 in that company, so if Russia moves its business back to
5 Russia, the U.S. laid-off workers would not qualify for the
6 TAA because a foreign company can choose to take their
7 production back home, leaving U.S. workers unemployed and not
8 covered under the TAA Program. Thank you.

9 COMMISSIONER JOHANSON: Thank you, Ms. Barker. Mr.
10 Wilschko again? Oh, okay. Yes, Dean Showers would like to
11 speak now?

12 MR. SHOWERS: Thank you. I just wanted to shift
13 gears. Before I came to work for Alliance for American
14 Manufacturing, I worked in a steel company on the outskirts
15 of a city in Pennsylvania, Reading, PA. In 2011, the city of
16 Reading, PA was designated the poorest city per capita in the
17 country.

18 And Reading was once one of the most thriving
19 industrial cities on the East Coast. It had industries all
20 over the place. When I was kid growing up, I could've walked
21 out of the door and went to work for four or five different
22 manufacturing industries.

23 But as the years went by, 2011, Reading was the
24 poorest city in the United States, and a lot of that was
25 caused by terrible trade policy and companies closing down

1 and offshoring or couldn't compete with the pressures from
2 abroad.

3 My particular story, I worked for over 40 years for
4 a steel tubing manufacturing on the outskirts of Reading.
5 When I first started there, there were over 400 employees.
6 Around 2011 when Reading got that designation, we were a
7 union shop.

8 Our contract came up. We were locked-out. We
9 weren't allowed to come back to work during a contract cycle,
10 and the employer sent us a letter and basically said, look,
11 I'm very sorry that this lockout has happened, but the
12 lockout was due to pressures that we compete with China; we
13 compete around the world, we compete with China, and to
14 compete with China, we just cannot pay union wages, which I
15 consider family-sustaining wages.

16 And it's not like we were at the top-end of the
17 middle class. We were all -- myself and my coworkers at the
18 time of the lockout -- we were down to about 65 workers. And
19 we were by no means upper middle class, but we were doing
20 okay. We were able to take care of our families and have a
21 nice comfortable living.

22 Another factor that gets overlooked -- and I think
23 my story could be told thousands of times across the country,
24 literally maybe 100,000 or more times across the country.
25 Another factor that gets overlooked though was, at the point

1 of that lockout and the end of that employment, myself and my
2 co-workers, the 65 of us that were left -- and we were of
3 many races and gender -- we were all older individuals.

4 We were approaching retirement, and there we were
5 at the end of our careers basically left without employment.
6 We were approved for TAA benefits, and that came up earlier
7 in the discussions today. We were approved for TAA benefits
8 because the employer said, look, they're losing their jobs
9 because of trade.

10 I can't employ them unless they want to come back
11 and work for just over minimum wage, which none us were
12 willing or able to do. But we got approved for a TAA
13 petition, and then we were disapproved from TAA because the
14 Government looked at us, well, you're in a labor dispute.

15 And we said, well, you know, we're not on strike.
16 We're locked out; the employer won't let us work. But that
17 disqualified us for a TAA. So, programs like that, there's
18 still a lot of slippage that people can slip through the
19 cracks.

20 So, the point I wanted to make was that until we
21 shore-up trade policy that doesn't have us competing against
22 the lowest wage-earners in the world, there's going to be job
23 loss in the country.

24 We have to have trade policy that allows our
25 manufacturers to compete in a fair market, and it also lifts

1 the workers around the globe up into a better class of
2 living. And until our trade policy addresses all of those
3 issues, you know, it's not going to be good policy.

4 So, I urge you at the ITC, trade is not a
5 one-size-fits-all. There really has to be thoughtful process
6 to put our trade policy in the best interest of workers, no
7 matter what sector they're from. Thank you.

8 COMMISSIONER JOHANSON: Thank you, Mr. Showers.
9 Would anyone else like to respond to this line of discussion?
10 Okay. If not, we have about 10 minutes left until we meet
11 the two-hour mark, and I want to know if any Commissioners
12 would like to raise questions. We'll start with Chair
13 Kearns.

14 CHAIR KEARNS: Thank you, Commissioner Johanson. I
15 think this has been a great roundtable discussion. I really
16 appreciate everybody's input in this. I guess I had two
17 questions. I'll just start with one and let other
18 Commissioners ask and maybe come back to the other one.

19 I guess one thing I'd like to hear a little bit
20 more about is I think some of the folks we've talked to today
21 have told us about how trade has beneficial for their
22 industries, and others have talked about how trade has been
23 harmful for their industries, but if you can tell us a little
24 bit more about how that impacts different groups within your
25 industry?

1 So, you know, the study we've been asked to do is
2 trying to understand how underrepresented groups are
3 impacted by trade. So, I mean, even if you benefit from
4 trade, if your industry benefits from trade, what we're
5 trying to understand is are underserved communities not
6 benefitting as others, whether that the racial minorities,
7 whether it might be women, and that's a really hard question
8 to answer

9 IT's a sensitive question, so it's a little bit
10 difficult to talk about anyway, but it's also a little bit
11 hard to answer, I think, because it's hard to know kind of
12 how to compare how one person's doing to another. But does
13 anyone have any thoughts on that?

14 And we were talking about these policies, you know,
15 just to give you some examples of the types of things we're
16 thinking about, you know, one example is workers that have to
17 pay tariffs on their imports, people that have less
18 disposable income are more impacted by that -- more harmed by
19 import tariffs, and those workers tend to be more likely to
20 be underrepresented or underserved.

21 On the other hand, we know about some industries
22 where imports have maybe decimated an industry, and those
23 industries may be disproportionately women,
24 disproportionately racial minorities -- I'm thinking, for
25 example, you know, the apparel industry in the United States

1 in the 20th century, disproportionately women in there, and
2 that industry was lost.

3 So, can you help us, thinking for the industries
4 that you all represent, how to think about those issues?
5 What impacts has it had, more or less, on underserved groups?
6 I know it's a really hard question, but whatever you can tell
7 us would be helpful. Mr. Creamer?

8 MR. CREAMER: Yeah, it's incredibly difficult, and
9 my first comment would be, you know, agriculture sometimes is
10 seen as, you know, white farmer and Hispanic farmworkers.
11 And while there's some of that, but in California, it's
12 incredibly diverse.

13 And if you look in the next 20, 30 years, I think
14 you will see that continue to change. The younger generation
15 is getting involved in agriculture. The ladders of
16 opportunity are there, and I hope that's something that
17 continues to grow.

18 But it's really hard to, you know, import, export.
19 It all comes down to the bottom line. Some growers, you
20 know, do both. And for the businesses and for the
21 farmworkers and for the communities, it really all depends on
22 is there employment still there, are those employment
23 opportunities, you know, growing and expanding, or are they
24 shrinking?

25 And I would argue that they're probably shrinking.

1 They're not growing. So, I think it goes more back to
2 competitiveness. So, trade is a balance, and it has to be
3 focused on the United States first, and then, you know, the
4 opportunities can be expanded from there.

5 But it's very hard to segregate-out the
6 agricultural community between underserved populations and
7 growers, and it's all, sort of, one sort of community, and
8 there's always, sort of, give and take and improvements that
9 can be made along the way.

10 But we don't have our businesses without, you know,
11 the communities that surround it. So, we're all connected,
12 and I think that's why it's very difficult to segregate those
13 things out.

14 CHAIR KEARNS: And I really appreciate your
15 recognizing the nuance of trade in all of the things that you
16 said today. But one thing I'm hearing you say is, at least
17 in California, the ag community is much more racially diverse
18 than most people might expect and that the opportunities in
19 agriculture may not be as good going forward as they have
20 been in the past, and that has something to do with trade.
21 Is that right?

22 MR. CREAMER: I can just share with my own personal
23 experience. I mean, our Board is very diverse with, you
24 know, different ethnicities and also sexes, and I see that in
25 our citrus industry. And I see that the next generation

1 that's coming forward, you know, start out working in the
2 field, and now they're buying property and expanding, or
3 maybe they're in farm labor contracting and now they've
4 bought their own property.

5 And so, there are opportunities moving forward, but
6 it all relies that the business sector is competitive moving
7 forward as well for all those communities to sort of have
8 that ladder of opportunity.

9 CHAIR KEARNS: Okay great, thank you. I heard Mr.
10 Tovar also wanted to respond?

11 MR. TOVAR: Yeah, I would say that there is some
12 differences that affect communities in different levels,
13 especially when there is not a very fair commerce or trade.
14 We have seen it in some policies that sometimes put a lot of
15 barriers, and then there is a war of tariffs.

16 And also, that affects commerce, and that's going
17 to affect, in a greater level, the farmworkers who have a
18 smaller net worth or net income; they will be more affected
19 than other sectors. And we can see it also even in meat
20 packing, how those workers are more vulnerable than others.

21 CHAIR KEARNS: Okay, thank you. And then Ms.
22 Murphy? I heard you also wanted to speak?

23 MS. MURPHY: Thank you. Just to say I think that
24 one of the things to think about if you're trying to isolate
25 trade as a variable, it's quite a complicated thing to do.

1 But one of the things to understand is people don't all come
2 at the change from the same place.

3 So, your access to land, your access to education,
4 access to credit, access to extension services, all these
5 things will play into whether or not the disruption that a
6 change in trade flow will create is something that your
7 community is able to take advantage of or that you as an
8 individual are able to take advantage of.

9 So, I think that's one thing, and I think another
10 thing is to understand that an awful lot of what trade is
11 driving around investment and around technology has a really
12 big impact on agriculture, but it's not at all connected to
13 an agricultural trade negotiation.

14 So, to be understanding that, you know, the trade
15 relationships, or the conversation that we're having with
16 trade partners around environmental standards or around
17 access to information, digital technologies, a lot of the
18 services agreements, these also have a big impact on the
19 conditions in which communities will experience a change in
20 market access.

21 And so, I think that would be another overlay to
22 have, to understand that trade would be disruptive, and it
23 can disrupt and concentrate power further, or it can disrupt
24 and break existing concentrations of power in a market, and
25 that will depend not so much on whether it's citrus or grain

1 -- that will matter, but there are a lot of other things that
2 can be looked at that are important in terms of what other
3 things people have access to in order to take advantage of a
4 new opportunity.

5 And I would mention with that, just as a last
6 point, of course the movement of labor is critical, and you
7 saw with NAFTA what happened to production in Mexico had a
8 huge impact on then a labor force that was sucked into U.S.
9 production under very unequal terms and had a big impact then
10 here on jobs and employment and is now having an impact on
11 who is buying land and farming, the change of who is
12 producing food, say, in the Midwest.

13 That's all resulting out of trade agreements from
14 20 or 30 years ago, and the way in which we liberalize
15 capital and certain goods and not labor not on the same
16 terms, that kind of thing.

17 CHAIR KEARNS: Okay, thank you. And can you tell
18 us what organization you represent, Ms. Murphy?

19 MS. MURPHY: I'm sorry -- The Institute for
20 Agriculture and Trade Policy. I'm speaking to you from
21 Minneapolis today.

22 CHAIR KEARNS: Okay great, thank you. And you gave
23 us a lot to think about. Is there something you could submit
24 to us written that would better kind of flesh-out some of the
25 big points that you've made there?

1 MS. MURPHY: I would be glad to. We've been around
2 a long time and have written a lot of things, and I would be
3 very glad to share some of that. I was hoping to listen
4 today and understand some of the questions, and I saw the
5 chance we could follow up after. Thank you.

6 CHAIR KEARNS: Okay, good. Thank you. And then
7 Mr. Wiltschko?

8 MR. WILTSCHKO: Yeah, Will Wiltschko, California
9 Trade Justice Coalition. You know, I actually grew up in the
10 Salinas area in California. I went to school with some of
11 the families that own a lot of the farms, some of the biggest
12 ones -- maybe some of your employers.

13 And I also interacted and went to school with folks
14 who were the children of farmworkers. And in my experience,
15 especially in Salinas and those areas, a lot of the workers
16 -- you kind of put it together as you go through your career
17 -- but a lot of the workers were displaced originally by
18 NAFTA.

19 You know, you had, what, 1.3 million family farmers
20 in Mexico who lost their livelihoods, right, and you have
21 massive migration to the United States where folks can
22 either, you know, work on the border at Wa'quila Tores
23 (phonetic) or come and work on these farms.

24 And, you know, I don't know if you guys have seen,
25 like, the conditions at some of these farms. You know, some

1 of you might have, some of you might not have, but these
2 aren't great, like, working conditions. They're basically,
3 like, 10 people in a room, 20 people in a room, bunkbeds, all
4 that.

5 And, you know, a lot of the folks I know who owned
6 a lot of the farms were white, and a lot of the folks who
7 worked the fields were Latino. And, you know, that's
8 something that I think persists to this day in California; it
9 kind of persists in a lot of places.

10 You know, a lot of working people who don't speak
11 English are often exploited by these industries. You know,
12 one of the things that I'm here to talk about especially is,
13 you know, manufacturing. And, you know, manufacturing is
14 really important, and these kinds of good union jobs are
15 particularly important for communities of color.

16 So, I have some facts and statistics here, but, you
17 know, supporting new manufacturing jobs is important for
18 black workers, you know, who've been particularly hit hard by
19 globalization and the decline in manufacturing employment.

20 So, while black workers' share of total employment
21 increased from 11.3 percent to 12.3 percent between '98 and
22 2020, their share of manufacturing employment was essentially
23 unchanged.

24 Meanwhile, they experienced the loss of over
25 646,000 good manufacturing jobs during that time period,

1 which is a 30.4 percent decline in total Black manufacturing
2 employment as part of the overall loss of more than 5 million
3 manufacturing jobs between 1998 and 2020 -- and this is from
4 the Economic Policy Institute.

5 You know, another key finding in this study on
6 diametrics, and I'll happily share it with folks is that, you
7 know, Black, Hispanic, Asian American, Pacific Islander, and
8 White workers without a college degree all earned
9 substantially more in manufacturing than in non-manufacturing
10 industries.

11 For medium-wage non-college-educated employees,
12 Black workers in manufacturing earn \$5,000 more a year. So,
13 that's 17.9 percent more than in non-manufacturing
14 industries. Hispanic workers earn \$4,800 more per year;
15 that's 17.8 percent more.

16 API -- Asian American Pacific Islander folks --
17 earn \$4,000 more a year, which is 14.3 percent more, and
18 white workers -- you know, there's going to be disparity here
19 -- earn \$10,000 more per year -- so, it's 29 percent higher.

20 So, manufacturing wage premiums are also
21 substantially larger for all workers at the 10th percentile
22 of the wage distribution.

23 I think my point here is that what we're pushing
24 for is we want trade deals that uplift working people across
25 the world. We don't want trade deals that support jobs

1 where, you know, people are living in poverty and they can't
2 afford homes.

3 And that's something that I think a lot of my
4 coalition members from the California Labor Federation, from
5 the Sacramento Central Labor Council, and other folks that
6 agree on it, is that we need good paying jobs in this country
7 where folks can live here -- especially in California where
8 prices have gone up exponentially over the last few years.
9 Thank you.

10 CHAIR KEARNS: Thank you very much. I think Ms.
11 Barker also online wanted to comment on this, and then after
12 that I'll turn things back over to Commissioner Johanson to
13 go to the other Commissioners.

14 MS. BARKER: Yes, thank you -- I'll be quick. So,
15 in Oregon, we had a company where 2000 food production
16 workers were laid off. 90 percent of those were
17 English-as-second-language, and they faced multiple barriers.
18 The impacts were felt harder with those workers.

19 Without access to technology, these workers are
20 lost in the system and unable to access services, let alone
21 gain skills and become reemployed, and this is significant
22 with the COVID virtual environment that increased someone's
23 ability to be unable to walk into an office and receive
24 services.

25 Thankfully, they qualified for the TAA for workers

1 program, and they are beginning to connect to get needed
2 services through our TAA technology to underserved
3 populations pilot. So, we have noticed that there is a
4 significant impact between access to reemployment and
5 training services in underserved populations. Thank you.

6 CHAIR KEARNS: Thank you.

7 COMMISSIONER JOHANSON: All right, next we're going
8 to move in order of seniority to the Vice Chair of the
9 Commission, Commissioner Stayin, and we have gone past two
10 hours, but I encourage you all to stay around if you'd like
11 to continue with the discussions. Vice Chair Stayin?

12 VICE CHAIR STAYIN: Thank you. Thank you all for
13 participating. We've learned some very important things.
14 One thing, Mr. Wiltschko, from a manufacturing standpoint,
15 has the state of California benefitted from trade in the
16 sense of foreign producers shifting and opening production
17 facilities in California and therefore increasing or taking
18 over those who have lost jobs? Has that happened at all in
19 California?

20 MR. WILTSCHKO: From my understanding, and I'm
21 happy to follow up via email with folks, I think that the
22 negative impacts overall kind of outweigh the positive.
23 That's what I'm seeing from my reports here. But I'm happy
24 to follow up more extensively on that and check the figures,
25 because I'd like to check the figures.

1 VICE CHAIR STAYIN: In terms of employment in
2 manufacturing, how would you say that compares to agriculture
3 employment?

4 MR. WILTSCHKO: I mean, let's see. What percentage
5 of California's GDP is ag right now?

6 VICE CHAIR STAYIN: Yes, but also in terms of
7 workers set-up.

8 MR. WILTSCHKO: Well, the manufacturing jobs -- the
9 well-paying union manufacturing jobs -- have significant,
10 like, economic benefits, not just for the workers and their
11 families but for the communities at large.

12 You have workers who are making living wages and,
13 you know, these union jobs, we've always kind of talked about
14 these union jobs. They are jobs in which you could, like,
15 afford to buy a house. You have healthcare benefits. You
16 have, you know, just these things that let you save money.

17 And these jobs, they've been going away in our
18 country and, you know, my generation, I'm 30-years-old, in
19 particular is noticing that. We're more concerned with that
20 than I think previous generations because we've seen job
21 growth in this country in the last few years.

22 And, you know, but you talk to people, you talk to
23 Americans on the ground, you talk to Americans in California,
24 you've got, like -- what are the jobs in? What are the
25 industries the jobs are in? A lot of these jobs are in the

1 gig economy, or you're working at an Amazon warehouse and
2 they're not jobs that you can afford to live off of.

3 You have to take multiple jobs. And so, I think
4 the comparison -- and I know there's great jobs in the
5 agricultural industry and, you know, I have family members
6 who are working great jobs there.

7 But I think in terms of numbers, it's higher than
8 the agricultural industry, and there's more higher paying
9 jobs in the manufacturing industry than in the agricultural
10 industry. And I'd love for that to change; I'd love for
11 there to be more high-paying jobs in the agricultural
12 industry, and I think that's a possibility someday.

13 But even in terms of just, like, the numbers
14 overall and how much, you know, manufacturing is part of
15 California's economy versus how much agriculture is part of
16 California's economy, it's like, what, 12 percent versus two
17 percent, right -- like, something like two percent. I'm not
18 sure if I have that number right, but still, it's different.
19 It's a different kind of sector.

20 VICE CHAIR STAYIN: So, would you say that there
21 are jobs being lost in manufacturing? And we have heard
22 today about a lot of jobs being lost in agriculture and some
23 really tough stories, you know, a lot of things for us to
24 think about.

25 In terms of manufacturing, you have also had quite

1 a few jobs lost in California as manufacturing has left?

2 MR. WILTSCHKO: Yes, quite a few job losses in
3 recent years. I have a report; I could send it over. But we
4 did a report on California's trade-related job losses.
5 Especially in manufacturing, it is, you know, 123 percent
6 increase in trade-related job losses over the last three
7 years in comparison to the three years before that.

8 So, it was, you know, 26,375 job losses certified
9 for TAA under petitions filed between 2017 and 2019 compared
10 to 21,507 between 2014 and 2016. And the state likewise
11 suffered 158 percent increase in trade-related job losses in
12 2019 over 2018.

13 So, California in a lot of ways is kind of the
14 hardest hit state in the country. It's suffered the highest
15 trade-related job loss numbers in the country, you know, from
16 the period of 2017 through 2019, and these rankings are worse
17 than Washington State's historical position as the state with
18 the second most TAA certifications in the country.

19 And, you know, I have 100 TAA -- cities here, like,
20 pages of cities with job losses over 100 in just the last few
21 years, and they're certified job losses under the Trade
22 Adjustment Assistance Program. So, California's been hit
23 really hard by that, and I'm happy to send that report over.
24 Thank you.

25 VICE CHAIR STAYIN: Well, as Commissioner Johanson

1 has invited you earlier to supply a copy of that report, I
2 think we would really appreciate having it.

3 MR. WILTSCHKO: Absolutely.

4 COMMISSIONER JOHANSON: Vice Chair Stayin, I might
5 point out, if you can't notice since you're virtual, Mr.
6 Lemay and Mr. Creamer would like to speak too in response to
7 your question.

8 VICE CHAIR STAYIN: Please do.

9 COMMISSIONER JOHANSON: I think Mr. Lemay was
10 first.

11 MR. LEMAY: And my only comment with regards to
12 references to job losses in our industry, I would say that
13 California still remains a robust agriculture economy, even
14 though in the pure numbers of GDP our importance often seems
15 to be diminished.

16 But we would think, even with that two percent,
17 what we produce has immense value to sustaining life.
18 Clarification, the report I referenced earlier in terms of
19 job loss is associated with the 2021 drought was 8,750 jobs
20 last year were lost due to the idling or fouling of land
21 associated with drought.

22 And I would say any transitions we've seen in more
23 recent years with regards to agricultural jobs has really
24 been about going back to the word "competitiveness", and
25 we've seen transitions away from labor-intensive jobs, much

1 of which are associated in the commodity sectors that I
2 represent, because of our continued dependency on an
3 available labor force, moving towards agriculture commodities
4 that can be done through mechanization, automation which, I
5 would challenge, has a bright future for the agriculture
6 sector, in terms of upscaling, retraining, and thus improving
7 the ag economy in terms of wages and protection for those
8 employees.

9 So, there's a lot of challenges associated with our
10 industry right now, but there's also a lot of promise.

11 COMMISSIONER JOHANSON: And Vice Chair Stayin, so
12 you have Mr. Creamer and Mr. Wiltsckho would like to speak,
13 and I might suggest, after that, I know some of our
14 participants are looking at their watches, we can move to
15 Commissioner Schmidtlein?

16 VICE CHAIR STAYIN: Mr. Creamer?

17 MR. CREAMER: Yeah, I just also want to comment on
18 the two percent of the GDP. California is a huge state, and
19 while agriculture might be, when you look at the rawest
20 numbers, two percent of the overall GDP, that is heavily
21 skewed to the larger population centers, the urban centers,
22 the coastal areas.

23 In the central valley and in the rural areas,
24 agriculture's probably, on average, 60 percent of the GDP
25 here. And so, we're a large state, and agriculture is very

1 important. And in some of the communities that I'm nearby
2 to, I would almost guess it's probably 90 percent of the
3 overall economy.

4 And so, it is very regional, and it needs a deeper
5 dive than just looking at the overall California statistics.
6 And I also want to point out that that two percent statistic
7 really looks at just the base, and agriculture today is not
8 just about the farmer on the ground and the farmworker doing
9 the harvesting or the farm employee doing the spray
10 applications, there's pest control advisors, there's nutrient
11 management specialists, there's irrigation technology
12 manufacturing.

13 There's all kinds of technology happening. There's
14 insurance agents. There's so much more to the agricultural
15 sector than just the raw farm inputs. And so, you look at
16 that, it is incredibly important in the underserved
17 communities that agriculture is in, and I just cannot stress
18 the importance of it.

19 And I would also -- I don't have statistics behind
20 it, but I would probably guess that a lot of the jobs that
21 have been lost from California, yes there's trade impacts,
22 but it's also because of the lack of competitiveness here in
23 California.

24 We are a very expensive state to do business in,
25 and it's a highly regulated state. So, every time you peel

1 the onion it's something different, but I just wanted to
2 point out, and really for our rural communities, we are a
3 very, very important part of the communities. Thank you.

4 VICE CHAIR STAYIN: Thank you. Commissioner
5 Schmidtlein, would you like to ask your questions?

6 COMMISSIONER JOHANSON: Vice Chair Stayin, I might
7 state that Mr. Wiltschko had his placard up, and then we can
8 move onto Commission Schmidtlein.

9 VICE CHAIR STAYIN: Okay, yes.

10 MR. WILTSCHKO: I'll be fast. I just wanted to
11 state that the importance of the agricultural industry in
12 California can't be understated because, you know, it's two
13 percent yeah, but we supply most of the produce to the rest
14 of the country and a large portion of the world.

15 And I will say that, in this report, a lot of the
16 job losses -- a significant portion are in the agricultural
17 industry too.

18 VICE CHAIR STAYIN: Thank you very much. Thank you
19 all for your testimony.

20 COMMISSIONER JOHANSON: Commissioner Schmidtlein?

21 COMMISSIONER SCHMIDTLEIN: Well thank you. I'm
22 going to hold my questions, since I'm conscious of the time
23 here, and I just want to thank everyone for participating on
24 this panel. I think it's been a very, very enlightening
25 discussion and very helpful. So, thank you all for being

1 here today.

2 COMMISSIONER JOHANSON: Thank you, Commissioner
3 Schmidtlein. Commissioner Karpel, do you have any questions
4 for us?

5 Okay. I don't think that she does. I might state
6 that we have gone a little bit past our two hours. It turns
7 that the conversations are really picking up now, so if you
8 want to keep talking, feel free to, but I understand that you
9 all also have other things to do.

10 So, if you'd like to stay, you're welcome to maybe
11 give some concluding comments if you'd like, but if not, we
12 certainly understand. And that goes for the people who are
13 participating virtually, as well.

14 Okay. Well actually, Chair Kearns would like to
15 pose another question, if you all have time to stick around.

16 CHAIR KEARNS: Great, thank you. I'm just thinking
17 back to something that you said, Mr. Creamer, and then
18 something that Mr. Lemay also said. Mr. Creamer, you were
19 talking about how much costs have increased, I think, pretty
20 dramatic numbers.

21 And you also mentioned, I think, environmental
22 regulations. And so, I guess, kind of two questions. One
23 is, tell us more about why the costs have gone up so much, if
24 you can -- you know, what specific costs have gone up?

25 And then I'm also just curious, I think what I

1 heard you suggesting was that, in California, you have some
2 very good environmental regulations but that, if I understood
3 you right, you were saying, when it comes to imports, maybe
4 we don't require the same level of high standards when it
5 comes to the environment.

6 And so, I just wanted to make sure that I was
7 hearing that right because I thought it was in the context
8 of, you know, what kind of policies might you suggest to kind
9 of improve the impact of trade? And so if you could speak
10 more to that?

11 And then, Mr. Lemay, I heard you say something
12 somewhat similar on labor. I think you were more focused on
13 how labor costs are very high, and I just wanted to know if
14 you had any thoughts on that and if it's kind of the same
15 situation of, you know, imports versus domestic production,
16 where domestic production has higher labor costs and if
17 there's things we can do in trade agreements to, kind of,
18 make that a more level playing field or what your thoughts on
19 that would be helpful as well.

20 MR. CREAMER: For the citrus industry, the cost
21 dynamics are roughly one-third pest and disease related,
22 one-third labor related to get everything to the market, and
23 then one-third water. So, you talk about regulation, and
24 most of the citrus production is south of the San Joaquin
25 delta, reliant on rainfall -- very dry area.

1 The Mediterranean Climate Water Policy in
2 California has been incredibly difficult, and then you've got
3 the implementation of the Sustainable Groundwater Management
4 Act. And so, in the middle of a drought, the cost of water
5 increases significantly, and that is a major driver.

6 In Coronavirus times, you know, the labor market
7 has tightened up for all sorts of reasons, and that has
8 significantly gone up, and still we're paying significant
9 wages just to get food to the market.

10 The pest and disease related and fertilizer costs
11 and transportation costs, it's just all of those things just
12 continue to expand significantly in the last couple of years.
13 And I just want to maybe make one more point so that it's
14 clear; my colleagues in Florida get a lot of attention for
15 citrus.

16 California is the largest citrus-producing state in
17 the country. We produce close to 90 percent of the fresh
18 citrus domestically that's available. And so, if you're
19 talking about the fresh citrus, it's coming from California,
20 and we're in a significant water shortage in an area.

21 So, there's all kinds of environmental regulation,
22 and look, they all have good intention and good reason. I'm
23 just more about finding ways to make that work better. But
24 the drivers are the three that I mentioned, for us.

25 CHAIRMAN KEARNS: And then if you could just tie

1 that back to -- on policy, you said something about how, with
2 imports, they don't face the same cost.

3 MR. CREAMER: Well, let's do one example, the Food
4 Safety Modernization Act. There was significant regulation
5 there. The Department of Food and Ag is doing that, and
6 there's inspections, and there's retailers that are applying,
7 sort of, the same standards and raising the standards there.

8 I would argue significantly that the same standards
9 are not being followed by what is imported. It's just a
10 matter of the resources. How could you possibly -- the USDA
11 or anybody else -- enforce the same regulations and do the
12 same auditing here on California producers that's happening
13 overseas? It's just impossible.

14 And so, retailers, you know, it's a cost business,
15 and they'll find the product somewhere else. And really, the
16 costs are borne by us, but we don't see it being a fair
17 playing field.

18 CHAIR KEARNS: Mr. Lemay?

19 MR. LEMAY: Yeah, I would say that, whether it's
20 the environmental policies or those associated with labor
21 that I made comments about earlier -- and just so everyone
22 knows, California, as of January 1, has a \$15 minimum wage,
23 highest in the nation.

24 As it was identified earlier, we have now
25 transitioned, in agriculture, under the Fair Labor Act, that

1 we've now transitioned to a 40-hour workweek within the
2 agriculture industry, where that is now our overtime
3 threshold beyond that period.

4 And so, these are all -- and I think anyone who's
5 been in this hearing today probably can argue pros and cons
6 associated with all of it -- my point is, is that as you
7 transition these new elements of business, there are costs
8 related to them.

9 And as costs increase, you know, consumers both
10 within the United States have a had a very low cost at the
11 place of retail on food. Although we're seeing some
12 inflationary elements within the retail space now, over time,
13 those have not relatively increased.

14 And that was the statistic I gave earlier that I'll
15 share again with the op-ed I wrote earlier. With California
16 stonefruit, over the last three years, we've seen a \$0.42 per
17 pound increase in our costs. The retail space, we're seeing
18 \$0.26 increase of what my members are getting per pound.

19 Costs are not sustaining themselves with what we're
20 getting paid to do. And my members love to farm. It is what
21 they love to do. If you can't sustain the business, they
22 can't do that.

23 And so, again, I'm not criticizing any of the
24 policies that have been put in place, but I will identify that
25 they have increased our operating costs, and those are

1 operating costs specific to California that other states do
2 not have to abide by, and those are other costs specific to
3 California that many import countries do not abide by.

4 And so, it's very hard, but I would say that our
5 growers also are quite proud that we operate with these high
6 standards. Fresh produce that we're putting in domestic
7 retail spaces and retail spaces around the world is at the
8 highest quality, meeting the highest standards, bar none.
9 But, at the endpoint, our members have to stay in business,
10 and that has to, you know, equal itself.

11 CHAIR KEARNS: Thank you. I guess I have just one
12 more question. Maybe this might be more for some of the
13 participants who are online, but going back to my first
14 question about kind of the distributional effects, one thing
15 we haven't touched on as much is how are small grower -- and
16 also for the witnesses here, I think you all may have
17 something to contribute as well -- small growers versus big
18 growers impacted by trade. How are workers affected versus
19 grower? How are migrant workers affected versus U.S.-born
20 workers?

21 And again, this is going pretty late, but if you
22 have any quick thoughts on those issues now, or if you want
23 to submit something to us after, we'd appreciate that. I
24 don't know if there's anybody online. Mr. Creamer?

25 MR. CREAMER: Yeah, I'm just going to say it's all

1 connected, again. I think Will or somebody brought it up
2 earlier that the larger growers are able to do the exports,
3 right? So, that is true. It's more complicated. There's
4 more restrictions and more requirements.

5 But again, it's all connected. In China when we
6 were displaced in the Chinese trade dispute, what did those
7 exporters do? They pushed more into other export markets
8 where they could -- and this is the citrus industry -- but
9 more of it went on the domestic market, right -- and so, in
10 direct competition.

11 And prices went down. In the navel market in
12 particular, during the first year, our season that we were
13 subject to the high tariffs, we saw a \$9, you know, prices
14 that we were paying for our citrus, well below our cost of
15 production.

16 That was because when there was a little bit of a
17 surplus because that supply was coming in, it was a race to
18 the bottom, and everybody was just trying to manage the
19 losses. And that affects everybody. And so while export is
20 predominately probably the larger growers, our small family
21 famers were the ones getting nailed with the downward supply.
22 So again, there's a market for everyone, and it's all
23 interconnected. Thank you.

24 CHAIR KEARNS: All right, thank you all.

25 COMMISSIONER JOHANSON: Okay, would anyone else

1 like to speak up on any issue that's been raised today? If
2 not, I certainly understand because we have gone over our
3 time by about a half hour. I think we'll conclude at this
4 point.

5 I would like to state that we really appreciate you
6 being here today. This has been very informative. The
7 reason we're in California is to hear from you folks. We
8 decided to come here as opposed to doing a similar roundtable
9 in D.C. on this subject, and I'm very glad we came. And we
10 appreciate you being here today. And with that, the
11 roundtable concludes. Thanks again.

12 (Whereupon, at 3:35 p.m., the roundtable in the
13 above-entitled matter concluded.)

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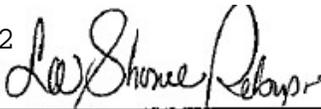
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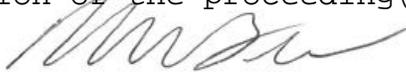
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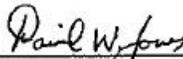
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