

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

November 19, 2021

The Honorable Katherine Tai  
U.S. Trade Representative  
Office of the U.S. Trade Representative  
600 17<sup>th</sup> Street, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20508

Dear Ambassador Tai:

As Members of Congress committed to strong economic partnerships between the United States and like-minded nations, we were pleased to read that the Biden Administration is reportedly considering working on a digital trade agreement with partners in the Indo-Pacific.<sup>1</sup> We support this effort and urge you to formally begin the negotiation process as soon as possible.

As you know, the United States has long leveraged the power of economic partnerships to improve the livelihoods of workers, small businesses, farmers, and consumers, in the United States and in our partner countries. Our leadership in this arena has also extended the benefits of these partnerships beyond immediate monetary gains by consistently fostering environmental, labor, and other norms and standards which improve the lives of citizens around the world.

For years, we have traveled to and heard from leaders in this important region. The consistent message we hear is that the presence of the United States — a Pacific nation — working with others in the region to develop pro-worker, pro-consumer, and pro-small business policies is critical. We believe the Biden Administration has an opportunity to concretely demonstrate U.S. commitment to a free and open Indo-Pacific to our partners by deepening our economic ties, but time is running out. Right this very moment, other countries who do not necessarily share our values are leading negotiations on policies that will govern the future of economic relations in the region. Without a U.S. presence, there is no guarantee that these policies will be pro-worker, pro-consumer, or pro-small business but we are certain that whatever policies are developed they will ultimately affect U.S. workers, consumers, and small businesses, given our interconnected world and economy.

We believe developing a digital trade agreement with like-minded countries in the Indo-Pacific region presents a unique opportunity to expand American economic leadership in the region and improve lives. We urge you to promptly advance such policy efforts that will ensure that small businesses and farmers

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-07-12/biden-team-weighs-digital-trade-deal-to-counter-china-in-asia>

have the digital tools they need to create good jobs, and that the digital world embodies the democratic values we champion around the world.

We appreciate your and the Administration's focus on the Indo-Pacific region and fully support the reported efforts on forming a regional digital agreement and ask for robust consultation with Congress throughout the process. This window of opportunity will not remain open indefinitely, and we strongly urge the Administration to join forces with our friends to help set the rules of the digital road and reinvigorate American leadership in the Indo-Pacific region.

We thank you for your consideration and look forward to working with you on these critical issues.

Sincerely,



Ami Bera, M.D.  
Member of Congress



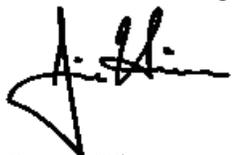
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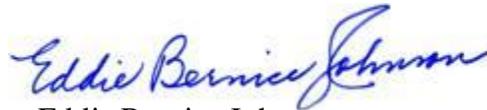
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Eddie Bernice Johnson  
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August Pfluger  
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Drew Ferguson  
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Andy Kim  
Member of Congress

cc: The Honorable Antony J. Blinken, Secretary of State  
The Honorable Gina M. Raimondo, Secretary of Commerce