



UNITED STATES COUNCIL FOR  
INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS

March 6, 2018

The Honorable Robert Lighthizer  
United States Trade Representative  
Office of the U.S. Trade Representative  
600 17th St  
NW Washington, DC 20508

Dear Ambassador Lighthizer:

Our organizations are writing to thank you for your letter of February 14, 2018, to Maria Lorena Gutiérrez, Minister of Trade, Industry and Tourism for the Government of Colombia, in which you identified a concrete list of actions that Colombia must complete before receiving a positive opinion from the United States on potential accession to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). The strong message in the letter and the continued leadership from your office on this issue is critical to ensuring Colombia follows through with reforming longstanding barriers to trade that undermine U.S. manufacturing and jobs.

U.S. manufacturing industries, including pharmaceuticals, trucking and others, are concerned about the market access and regulatory barriers highlighted in your letter, which are inconsistent with Colombia's international commitments and basic OECD tenets of transparency, public participation and non-discrimination. While we appreciate the Government of Colombia's willingness to engage with the United States, other OECD members and industry on these issues, it is critical that Colombia meet the high standards of OECD membership *before* accession.

We are concerned, furthermore, that allowing Colombia to accede to the OECD before the country addresses these specific concerns would set a damaging precedent in the region, signaling to other countries that want to join the organization—such as Argentina, Brazil and Peru—that they can ignore OECD standards and still be admitted. The OECD does not have a mechanism to enforce effectively any conditional commitments once Colombia or other countries have acceded to the OECD, making it more difficult to resolve any specific concerns once the process has concluded.

Our organizations urge you to continue to work closely with the Government of Colombia to ensure it commits to and takes concrete actions that finally resolve longstanding market access and regulatory barriers. Colombia's resolution of these issues is a critical prerequisite to its OECD accession.

We welcome the opportunity to discuss these issues with you or your staff at your convenience.

Sincerely,

National Association of Manufacturers (NAM)  
Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America (PhRMA)  
United States Council for International Business (USCIB)