

April 7, 2025

The Honorable Jamieson Greer
Ambassador
Office of the U.S. Trade Representative
600 17th Street NW
Washington, DC 20508

Dear Ambassador Greer,

I commend your hard work in advancing President Trump's agenda of putting America first in our country's interactions with global trading partners, and request that the Office of the United States Trade Representative explore economic development opportunities for the district I represent—the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI)—in ongoing trade negotiations.

The President's actions have set the stage for a significant shift in trade, offering long-term benefits for the U.S. and encouraging fairer agreements worldwide. I am particularly encouraged by recent reports that over 50 countries have already reached out to begin negotiations on tariffs and trade terms with the White House.¹ This response underscores the global significance of the President's vision and presents new openings to advance American economic interests in regions of critical importance. Your leadership in reshaping trade arrangements is guiding the nation toward greater prosperity.

As you lead the charge in these negotiations, I urge you to consider the CNMI, the closest American territory to the economic hubs of Asia. Despite its strategic location, the CNMI is experiencing deep economic hardship in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. Our once-vibrant tourism sector remains at only half of pre-pandemic levels, and diversification into other industries has been limited.

A collapsed American economy in the Pacific does not serve the interests of the United States, our allies, or the broader Indo-Pacific strategy. A stable, self-reliant CNMI strengthens America's posture in the region and supports the Department of Defense's ongoing investments in training and readiness across the Marianas.

In this environment, I believe we can collaborate to ensure that the President's economic victories include a lasting and positive impact for U.S. territories in the Pacific. Specifically, I see great promise in leveraging current trade negotiations to include provisions or incentives that direct foreign investment toward the Northern Mariana Islands—whether through regional

¹ Adriana Gomez and Fatima Hussein, *Trump says he's not backing down on tariffs, calls them 'medicine' as markets reel*, (April 7, 2025), available at <https://apnews.com/article/trump-tariffs-recession-financial-markets-negotiations-retaliation-860760cdc1aa2cc58853c9aab987e36d>

sourcing, manufacturing, or sector-specific development. These incentives could serve both economic development goals and the broader strategic imperative of reinforcing American presence in a contested region.

This vision is consistent with the federal commitments made in the Covenant to Establish a Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands in Political Union with the United States. Section 603(d) directs the federal government to “seek to obtain from foreign countries favorable treatment for exports from the Northern Mariana Islands,” and encourages those countries to consider the CNMI a developing territory. Section 904(a) further requires that the U.S. government provide “sympathetic consideration” and opportunities for the CNMI to express views on international matters that directly affect us.²

Prioritizing the CNMI’s inclusion in regional trade discussions would mark the first time a President has strategically elevated the territories within the context of global trade policy. This approach recognizes that the needs of our communities need not rely solely on federal taxpayer support. The President now has a unique opportunity to extend the reach of his economic vision to U.S. territories—driving private investment, fostering real economic growth, and ultimately reducing federal obligations through the creation of a sustainable, locally-driven economy.

I ask that the Office of the United States Trade Representative examine how current and future trade negotiations may incorporate economic development opportunities in the CNMI. In doing so, we can uphold our commitments under the Covenant while advancing the President’s broader goal of securing American prosperity through stronger, fairer trade.

I welcome the opportunity to discuss how foreign investment can help stimulate sustainable economic growth in the Northern Mariana Islands, and how we can align this effort with ongoing trade negotiations. I believe that with strategic coordination, we can create meaningful wins for both the national interest and for American communities in the Pacific.

Thank you for your leadership and for your service. I look forward to working with your office to explore these possibilities.

Sincerely,



KIMBERLYN KING-HINDS
Member of Congress

cc: The Honorable Scott Bessent, Secretary of the U.S. Department of the Treasury
The Honorable Stephen Miran, Chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers
The Honorable Peter Navarro, Senior Counselor to the President of the United States

² Covenant to Establish a Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands in Political Union with the United States of America (1975), *reprinted in* 48 U.S.C. § 1801