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Over 150 Manufacturing and Agricultural Interests Applaud Border Governors' Declaration to "Honor" US Commitment on Cross-Border Trucking with Mexico

September 9, 2009/Washington, DC: More than 150 U.S. manufacturers, companies and agricultural interests today applauded a declaration by the Governors of Arizona, California, New Mexico and Texas calling on the U.S. government to honor its commitment to implement a cross-border trucking program with Mexico.

In their statement, made at the conclusion of the recent "United States-Mexico Border Governors Conference," the four U.S. border governors urged the U.S. government to "honor the North American Free Trade Agreement's long haul commercial vehicles regulations to allow U.S. and Mexican trucks to safely operate across our international border between our countries."

"We applaud the clear call by the Border Governors for the United States to stand by its commitment to one of its most important trading partners," said Alliance spokesman Steve Mulder. "These Governors recognize that by failing to honoring our commitment, the U.S. Government is jeopardizing thousands of U.S. companies and millions of U.S. workers," according to Mulder.

As part of the NAFTA, the United States, Canada and Mexico agreed to allow each others trucks to operate in the NAFTA countries. The vehicles and drivers of Mexico and Canada must comply with all U.S. safety regulations. In fact, the U.S Congress imposed a number of additional requirements on Mexico several years ago – requirements the Department of Transportation recently confirmed Mexico's trucks and drivers clearly meet. "Just weeks ago, the DOT Inspector General's audit found that Mexican trucks and truck drivers are as safe as their U.S. counterparts. Since we know that there are no material safety issues to concern us, there are also no good reasons to keep Mexican trucks out of the United States."

In spite of DOT's findings, political claims of safety concerns prompted the Congress in March of this year to effectively eliminate a cross-border trucking safety demonstration project run by DOT. That action put the United States in violation of the North American Free Trade Agreement. It also prompted the Government of Mexico to announce retaliatory tariffs on about \$2.4 billion of U.S. manufactured

and agricultural exports to Mexico. Mexico's actions were deemed permissible by an international panel of trade experts, including representatives from the United States.

"The tariffs come at a time that U.S. workers can least afford them and this harmful situation, which becomes more costly to U.S. companies every day the tariffs remain in place," said Mulder. "We urge the Congress and Obama Administration to heed the words of our Border Governors and immediately resolve the cross-border trucking dispute, so that the United States can fulfill its obligations and so that U.S. companies and workers can get out from under these devastating tariffs," he added.

ABOUT THE ALLIANCE

The Alliance to Keep US Jobs is a coalition of 150 U.S. companies and associations that are concerned about the adverse impact to the U.S. economy stemming from a failure to resolve the longstanding trucking dispute. Members of the Alliance represent many thousands of U.S. workers that are employed by companies and industries that are subject to tariffs on their products shipped to Mexico.

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