

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

April 23, 2024

The Honorable Katherine Tai  
United States Trade Representative  
600 17<sup>th</sup> Street NW  
Washington, DC 20006

Dear Ambassador Tai:

We write to follow up on your recent testimony at the U.S. House of Representatives Ways and Means Committee on April 16, 2024, to request your assistance in holding Mexico accountable for their responsibility in the 1944 Water Treaty.

In 1944, the United States signed a treaty with the Mexican government to receive an average of 350,000-acre feet of water from Mexico every year, over a five-year cycle. For over 30 years there have been consistent delays in meeting these obligations, which have severely affected U.S. agriculture. At this time, Mexico owes the United States over 750,000-acre feet of water, the most they have ever owed at this point in the cycle. For South Texas, which is already experiencing dire drought conditions, it is imperative that immediate action is taken to mitigate the impact on the agricultural industry and our communities.

In 2023, Texas exported approximately \$7.3 billion worth of agricultural products. This figure is unlikely to climb due to the negative effects the drought has already had on our growers, including the closure of the last operating sugar mill in Texas. The closure of this sugar mill resulted in the loss of 500 jobs and will have a profoundly negative economic impact. Now, the lack of water also puts the citrus industry at risk. The loss of water to the Rio Grande Valley could cost the region close to \$1 billion in annual economic activity, jeopardizing jobs and crop land. This means higher prices for all Americans.

Accordingly, we request a follow-up meeting to discuss how we can work together to resolve this issue using the full resources of the U.S. Government, and to outline what steps you can take in your capacity to secure water deliveries that are owed by Mexico.

I firmly believe that with the help of your office and the State Department, we can enforce Mexico's compliance and secure water for our South Texas farmers. Thank you for your consideration of our requests.

Sincerely,



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Jodey C. Arrington  
MEMBER OF CONGRESS



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Monica de la Cruz  
MEMBER OF CONGRESS