



Conservatives
for
Property Rights

For Immediate Release

Contact: James Edwards
exec@property-rts.org

Conservatives Urge U.S. Trade Representative to Include Strong Intellectual Property Protections in Modernized NAFTA

(Washington, D.C., April 19, 2018) — A group of conservatives today asked the U.S. Trade Representative to make intellectual property protections part of the renegotiated North American Free Trade Agreement.

Their letter, initiated by the Conservatives for Property Rights coalition, urges U.S. trade officials to make IP rights “a nonnegotiable item in NAFTA modernization” before NAFTA talks are concluded.

Highlighting the vital importance of strong IP protections in NAFTA, the letter notes the significant contribution American innovation plays in U.S. competitiveness and IP-centered companies’ outsized contribution to the U.S. economy.

The writers discuss how U.S.-based biopharmaceutical firms rely on the exclusivity under patents to spur further research and development. Only strong, secure, enforceable intellectual property rights enable the “private-sector R&D [that] has led to new treatments and cures.”

The letter states that “our NAFTA trading partners continue to fall short of keeping their commitments and punitively treating American R&D-based companies. . . . Canada and Mexico jeopardize their own citizens’ health and American industrial competitiveness by the expropriation of U.S. IP, discriminatory pricing, nontariff barriers and otherwise denying practical exercise of the exclusivity patents and IP are supposed to secure.”

“It’s vital that NAFTA protects the rights of IP owners in all three countries, and that the agreement conform to high standards like those found in U.S. law,” Conservatives for Property Rights executive director James Edwards said. “For biologics, the growing field of pharmaceutical therapies, no less than 12 years of data exclusivity is acceptable. That aligns with reciprocity as the new trade standard.”

Signers of the letter include the leaders of the American Conservative Union, Citizens Against Government Waste and Let Freedom Ring. In all, 13 signatories joined the letter.

The correspondence was sent at the start of the latest meeting of U.S., Canadian and Mexican negotiators in Washington.

###