Mississippi River Cities and Towns Initiative

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Mississippi River Mayors Celebrate the USMCA Entering Into Force Today

July 1, 2020, St. Louis, MO – Today is an historic moment for trade across North America that affects all cities and towns along the Mississippi River as the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) enters into force.

A Modern Trade Agreement More Suited to Supporting Current Needs
Because of this agreement, the United States, the US agriculture sector, and our communities along the Mississippi River should see a more balanced, reciprocal, and sustainable increase in agriculture output at a time when our economy is seeking to recover from the effects of COVID-19. The Mississippi River is key to the transportation of 60% of US corn and soybean exports, and our communities will see more goods flow through our communities as a result of this agreement.

Better Trade for Our Farmers, Ports, and Manufacturing
US farmers, commodity movers, and food manufacturing in the United States are expected to see increases in trade; farmers in particular are projected to benefit from an increase of $2 billion in exports thanks to the USMCA. Under the North American Free Trade Agreement, the soybean sales to Mexico quadrupled, while sales to Canada doubled. Looking toward the future our soybean farmers are ensured access to their second-largest international market in Mexico.

Furthermore, the USMCA empowers domestic support measures for our agricultural producers and allows those programs broader application in the agreement.

The USMCA Helps Our Medium and Small Businesses
Much of the global commodity supply chain is supported by medium and small businesses throughout our corridor. The USMCA provides resources to our small business for access to digital and e-commerce platforms for exports.

More importantly, the USMCA also provides for greater participation in government procurement programs and opportunities giving our small businesses better access into multiple trade avenues throughout the continent.
“We applaud the steps taken by the Administration and the Congress to put the USMCA into place, that will help our communities to thrive. Our cities are proud to have access to these strong and reliable trading partners for years to come, as we seek to strengthen our international bonds,” said Bob Gallagher, Mayor of Bettendorf, IA and Co-Chair of the Mississippi River Cities & Towns Initiative.

“My City resides at the gateway of the Port of Southern Louisiana, our nation’s largest commodity port largely fueled by exports. Today, a new trade agreement for the continent enters into force providing our ports and cities a more reliable structure through which to secure the largest economy on the Mississippi River – manufacturing,” detailed Sharon Weston Broome, Mayor of Baton Rouge, LA and Co-Chair of the Mississippi River Cities & Towns Initiative.

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**Mississippi River Cities & Towns Initiative (MRCTI)** is a coalition of 96 mayors from across the Mississippi River Corridor which spans along ten states from Minnesota to Louisiana. The Mississippi River provides drinking water to more than 20 million people and 50 cities. More than 40 percent of the nation’s agricultural commodity output moves on the Mississippi River. The River’s resources support 1.5 million jobs and create $496.7 billion in annual revenue.