

March 10, 2014

An Taoiseach Enda Kenny  
Department of the Taoiseach  
Government Buildings  
Upper Merrion Street  
Dublin 2  
Ireland

Dear Taoiseach Kenny:

Recognizing the profound importance of business ties between Ireland and the United States of America, we offer you our best wishes on the occasion of your upcoming visit to the United States.

The Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership negotiations – launched under the Irish presidency of the EU – represent a vital opportunity to advance our shared interests in advancing prosperity and creating high-caliber jobs. We applaud Ireland's sustained leadership in advocating for a comprehensive and ambitious TTIP agreement. We believe this is an unprecedented opportunity not only to create the right conditions for increased trade and investment flows between the U.S. and the EU, from which Ireland will be a major beneficiary, but also to ensure that together we are setting the highest possible standards of behavior for others to emulate in critical areas.

Chief among these is protection of intellectual property rights (IP), including trademarks and trade dress across all sectors. Measures that threaten to degrade such property rights – whether patents, copyrights, trademarks or any other form of IP – adversely affect American and Irish businesses alike.

This is the key reason we are so concerned about the plain packaging legislation that Ireland is currently considering. We believe it is entirely feasible to protect the public interest without undermining effective protections for intellectual property rights. Measures comparable to those under consideration in Dublin are presently being challenged in Geneva as being inconsistent with international trade obligations, as they threaten to erode global respect for robust IP protection.

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As such, we urge you to consider the broader implications and avoid precipitous action that could convey an unintended and adverse message to Irish companies and foreign investors. Thank you for your consideration of our views.

Sincerely,

Emergency Committee for American Trade  
National Association of Manufacturers  
National Foreign Trade Council  
Transatlantic Business Council  
United States Council for International Business  
U.S. Chamber of Commerce

cc: H.E. Ambassador Anne Anderson