



**THE SECRETARY OF COMMERCE**  
Washington, D.C. 20230

September 17, 2004

The Honorable John L. Mica  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515-0907

Dear Representative Mica:

Thank you for your letter regarding your draft legislation to establish a Department of Commerce and Trade. The Administration shares your goal of enhancing the effectiveness of, and cooperation among, the various trade-related Federal agencies. As you know, trade plays a vital role in the Administration's economic agenda. Indeed, President Bush's top economic priority – the creation of more jobs for American workers – is strongly advanced by free and fair trade. Such trade opens markets for American products and services and helps create more higher-paying jobs for American workers, while providing lower prices and more choices to American consumers. We are achieving real results in creating export opportunities for American workers and in the vigorous enforcement of our trade laws.

The various agencies within the Administration that share responsibility for trade-related matters understand that the economic goals set out by President Bush require that our agencies work together effectively. Such cooperation is evident in the work of the Trade Promotion Coordinating Committee (TPCC). The leadership exhibited by the heads of the TPCC member agencies under this Administration has resulted in a new culture of coordination and client service among the agencies and is making a difference in the quality of our trade programs across the board. We have built a number of bridges across the agencies, including the Overseas Private Investment Corporation, the Department of Commerce's Commercial Service and Advocacy Center, and the Export-Import Bank, to provide American workers and businesses faster service and better products.

Agency cooperation is further exemplified in the close coordination between the Department of Commerce, the United States Trade Representative, the Department of Agriculture, and other trade-related agencies in advancing the President's free trade agenda. Our efforts and team work are paying off. This Administration has completed free trade agreements with twelve countries and is in negotiations with ten others. In addition to our bilateral negotiations, we will continue to aggressively press for free markets around the world.

Our efforts at integration and coordination among the trade-related agencies go a long way toward the goals of your draft legislation. However, we would be happy to discuss with you the proposals put forth in your draft bill to further enhance the Administration's activities aimed at improving coordination and effectiveness among Federal agencies in carrying out our trade agenda. Please feel free to contact me, or Acting Assistant Secretary for Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs Brett Palmer at (202) 482-3663, to discuss these issues further.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Donald J. Evans", written over a large, stylized flourish.

Donald J. Evans