

NEWS



From Congressman

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CRANE STATEMENT ON TRADE DISPUTE WITH MEXICO OVER CORN SYRUP IMPORTS

WASHINGTON, D.C.- Congressman Phil Crane (R-IL), Chairman of the Ways and Means Subcommittee on Trade, issued the following statement today regarding the United States' dispute with Mexico over imports of high fructose corn syrup.

"I am very disappointed with the course of this dispute with Mexico and for its wider implications for the free trading system. Mexico created unfair barriers against U.S. exports of high fructose corn syrup several years ago, and the United States rightly triumphed in NAFTA and WTO dispute settlement cases against Mexico. Instead of acting in good faith to correct its law, however, the Mexican government chose to create new protectionist measures that are inconsistent with Mexico's obligations under the WTO and NAFTA.

"Moreover, Mexico has expanded its assault on free trade and our trade relationship by raising protectionist measures against many other products such as American beef and rice. The United States has correctly chosen to contest these measures at the WTO, and as with high fructose corn syrup, the United States will win its cases. But winning cases is not our goal. We want compliance.

"We are at a critical impasse. Free trade is under attack from all directions. We have witnessed recently the collapse of WTO negotiations. I fear that there will be more backsliding. As an advocate of free trade and Chairman of the Subcommittee on Trade, my job and passion is to defend the principles and practice of free market and trade against protectionist elements anywhere in the world. My Congressional colleagues know my principles and that I will speak out against protectionist efforts by the United States as quickly as I do against efforts in other countries. Mexican officials must find the will to do the right thing and drop this discriminatory law.

"While I also support the Administration's efforts to increase our access to the Mexican market for beef, rice, pork and other commodities, high fructose corn syrup should remain a priority as well. We cannot ask our corn producers and refiners to be patient any longer. I do not suggest taking retaliatory actions against countries lightly, but this dispute has run its course. I ask the Administration to work with Congress to address this dispute and to examine appropriate actions including retaliatory and compensatory measures against Mexico. Mexico is destabilizing our economic and trade relations while harming its own economy and consumers. I urge Mexican government officials to rethink their position and repeal the discriminatory sweetener tax."

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