



For Immediate Release  
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**BAUCUS URGES SCHWAB TO DEMAND  
BALANCED OUTCOME IN AGRICULTURE  
AHEAD OF DOHA ROUND GENEVA MEETING**

*Senator joins Agriculture Committee colleagues in letter to U.S. Trade Representative*

Washington, DC – Senate Finance Committee Chairman Max Baucus (D-Mont.) today joined Agriculture Committee Chairman Tom Harkin (D-Iowa), Ranking Member Saxby Chambliss (R-Ga.), and 14 other Agricultural Committee members in urging a balanced outcome to Doha Round agriculture negotiations. In a letter to U.S. Trade Representative Susan Schwab, the lawmakers expressed concern over decisions in the agricultural negotiations that can impact domestic producers. Trade ministers from key World Trade Organization member countries are expected to meet next week in Geneva in an effort to complete a framework agreement for the Doha Round.

**“I’m watching the WTO negotiations closely. So far, our trading partners have not demonstrated that they are willing to open their markets sufficiently, and they continue to ask for more loopholes to protect their products from competition,”** said Baucus. **“I have always maintained that other countries must provide significant new market opening if they expect the United States to discuss our farm programs. I am hopeful that the ministerial can produce an acceptable way forward, but still believe that no deal is better than a bad deal for US farmers, ranchers and firms.”**

The Senate Finance Committee has jurisdiction over all U.S. international trade. The full text of the Senators’ letter follows here:

July 18, 2008

The Honorable Susan Schwab  
United States Trade Representative  
600 17th Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20508

Dear Ambassador Schwab:

As you prepare for the World Trade Organization ministerial meeting next week, we want to express our keen interest in the negotiations. Unfortunately our trading partners up until now have not committed to a balanced outcome involving an ambitious result in market access. Reductions in trade-distorting domestic support must be accompanied by real market access gains that are comparable in magnitude and will provide net gains for U.S. agriculture. Anything less will not receive our support.

The October 2005 proposal put forward by the United States would require substantial cuts in U.S. farm programs. These reductions in domestic support were carefully calibrated in relation to-market access gains. However, many of our trading partners continue to call for greater cuts in U.S. farm programs while refusing to make significant tariff reductions. The provisions of the most recent text on sensitive products, special products, the proposed new special safeguard mechanism (SSM) and exceptions for recently acceded members do not inspire much confidence that a balanced agreement can be reached.

Twice before, the United States rightly rejected an unbalanced framework agreement and opted instead to continue discussions towards achieving a comprehensive result that will generate new trade flows. Discussion in Geneva must fulfill the underlying mandate of the Round to foster development, yet this objective need not and cannot be an exercise in which developed countries like the United States accept an unbalanced outcome. Neither U.S. agriculture nor individual commodities should have to shoulder an unfair burden of the negotiations. If you are presented with an unbalanced text, we urge you to reject it in favor of continued negotiations.

Very truly yours,

Tom Harkin  
Patrick Leahy  
Kent Conrad  
Max Baucus  
Blanche Lincoln  
Debbie Stabenow  
E. Benjamin Nelson  
Ken Salazar  
Amy Klobuchar  
Robert Casey, Jr.

Saxby Chambliss  
Pat Roberts  
Thad Cochran  
Lindsey Graham  
Norm Coleman  
Mike Crapo  
John Thune

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