



Internet Association



April 1, 2019

The Honorable Robert E. Lighthizer
United States Trade Representative
Office of the United States Trade Representative
600 17th Street NW
Washington, DC 20508

Dear Ambassador Lighthizer,

We write to urge the Office of the US Trade Representative (USTR) to negotiate an early and ambitious outcome on digital trade as part of its upcoming bilateral negotiations with Japan. The United States and Japan share a deep experience and understanding regarding the importance of trade rules that facilitate cross-border digital activity. An agreement reflecting this alignment would advance U.S. economic priorities with Japan and mark the direction for negotiations in the WTO and discussions in other fora such as the G20.

At a time of rising digital protectionism around the world, the United States' future strategic and competitive edge depends not only on today's investments in tomorrow's technologies, but also on working with other countries to develop binding international norms that keep the global markets of the digital economy fair, open, and competitive. As noted in the Executive Order on Maintaining American Leadership in Artificial Intelligence, "enhancing international and industry collaboration with foreign partners and allies" is a national priority.

There is no trading partner that is more closely aligned with the United States on digital trade than Japan. High-level bilateral meetings in the coming weeks provide a good opportunity to commit to early stage digital trade negotiations. We urge you to seize this strategic and timely opportunity.

Sincerely,

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Information Technology Industry Council