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November 30, 2015

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Senate Majority Leader
The Capitol, S-230
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Leader McConnell,

I write regarding the absence of an American ambassador to Mexico, an important diplomatic post that has been vacant for nearly four months.

It is difficult to overstate the importance of the relationship between the U.S. and Mexico. With respect to security, the Mexican government has been a credible partner in seeking to address long-standing issues along our southern border and helpful in dealing with the transmigration of those seeking to enter the U.S. illegally. We will need a continued partnership on security issues facing both our nations and the region in the future. With respect to trade, Mexico is our third-largest trading partner with more than a half a trillion dollars in bilateral trade. They are second among U.S. export markets and rank third in supplying U.S. imports. Continued collaboration between our two governments can lead to improvements in the facilitation of cross-border travel and commerce.

U.S.-Mexico relations are critical to the nation as a whole and, with issues that arise in our bilateral ties hitting particularly close to home, are of paramount interest to border states. With the retirement of Ambassador E. Anthony Wayne in July, the position of U.S. ambassador to Mexico has been vacant for months. Toward ensuring U.S. interests are well-represented in Mexico City, State Department Assistant Secretary for Western Hemisphere Roberta Jacobson was nominated for the position in July of this year. She received bipartisan approval by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee earlier this month.

Without an ambassador in place, I am concerned that the leadership and prominence required to ensure the continued cooperation on issues that are vital to our interests are lacking. I know there are many demands on the time available for the Senate to conduct its business. However, I believe the consideration of Ms. Jacobson's nomination to be U.S. Ambassador to Mexico would be time well-spent.

Sincerely,



JEFF FLAKE
United States Senator