

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515-1304**

August 14, 2020

His Excellency Andrés Manuel López Obrador  
Presidente Constitucional de los Estados Unidos Mexicanos  
Plaza de la Constitución S/N,  
Centro Histórico de la Cdad. de México, Centro, Cuauhtémoc,  
06066 Ciudad de México, CDMX, México

Dear President López Obrador:

Without the political will to enforce Mexico's labor law reforms or the worker protections included in the US-Mexico-Canada Agreement ("USMCA"), wages and working conditions will not improve as promised. State governments in Mexico are undermining the worker protections that the new Mexican labor laws and the USMCA guarantee. As members of the U.S. House of Representatives who are committed to improving conditions for workers throughout North America, we urge you to ensure that states comply with the letter and spirit of Mexican labor law so that Mexican workers can finally organize independent unions and their lawyers can advocate for them without fear of arrest.

The persecution of Mexican labor lawyer Susana Prieto Terrazas by state officials in Tamaulipas and Chihuahua calls Mexico's commitment to improving workers' rights into question. Prieto was arrested in June on spurious charges related to her efforts to register an independent union for workers at U.S. auto parts plant Cardone and only released after three weeks of detention without bail. The conditions of her release require her to quit labor advocacy in Matamoros for more than two years and move to the State of Chihuahua where the state government has issued warrants for her arrest.

It appears that conservative governors of northern border states in Mexico are collaborating with the manufacturing industry to attack workers fighting for higher wages and safe workplaces as well as their advocates. After protection unions and employers were unable to invalidate Mexico's new labor law, border states are now using political persecution to intimidate workers and their advocates. Their attacks on Prieto are extreme but unfortunately not unique.

We understand that you are trying to implement and enforce dramatic labor law changes in your country. However, if state governments in Mexico are able to willfully violate basic labor rights, we will urge USTR to swiftly and forcefully utilize the rapid response system in order to ensure Mexican compliance with the agreement.

We urge you to ensure that all Mexican states comply with the labor obligations in the USMCA and to ensure the politically motivated charges against Prieto and arrest warrants in Chihuahua and Tamaulipas are dropped and the rights-violating conditions of her release suspended.

We look forward to working with you to strengthen labor rights throughout North America, but we are concerned by the first weeks of USMCA implementation. Please respond with your government's plan for ensuring that Mexico's states stop interfering with Mexico's new labor law and the USMCA.

Sincerely,



Jesús G. "Chuy" García  
4th District of Illinois



Jan Schakowsky  
9<sup>th</sup> District of Illinois

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