



Mexico and Canada: No to Reopening USMCA

Following a suggestion by Democratic House Speaker Nancy Pelosi that changes to the USMCA needed to be made in the actual text of the agreement before Democrats would pass the USMCA, both Mexican and Canadian officials have rejected reopening renegotiations.

“We’re saying that enforcement has to be in the treaty, not in the implementing legislation,” Pelosi recently told *Politico Playbook* during an interview on Tuesday. Early on, high-ranking Democrats had sounded as if they would accept the USMCA if they could tweak the legislation to implement the USMCA — in an effort to assure that Democrat goals would be met.

On Thursday, Jesús Seade Kuri, the Undersecretary for North America for Mexico’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs shot down Pelosi’s request. “Reopening it is as good as killing it,” Seade Kuri said. Likewise, Canadian Foreign Minister Chrystia Freeland also ruled out the possibility of reopening negotiations, comparing the suggestion to opening “Pandora’s box.”

“When it comes to the issue of actually opening up the agreement, that’s where Canada’s view is, we’ve done our deal,” Freeland told reporters on Thursday. “This was a very intense negotiation. A lot of time, a lot of effort went into it, compromises were made on all sides, and we believe that people need to be very careful around opening up what could really be a Pandora’s box.”

Despite Pelosi’s and other Democratic lawmakers’ partisan politicking that the USMCA does not do enough in terms of strengthening worker’s rights and protecting the environment, Freeland has previously described the USMCA as a “very progressive agreement.”

On Thursday, Seade Kuri also met with the New Democrat Coalition and the Congressional Hispanic Caucus to convince lawmakers that it isn’t necessary to reopen negotiations. Instead, he explained to them that the changes they seek could easily be made in the USMCA implementation bill that Congress is required to pass in order for the United States to officially enter the agreement.

Further assuaging Democratic concerns about Mexican labor reform, he also told lawmakers that such a Mexican labor reform bill is currently pending in the Mexican Senate, where it is expected to pass this month. Seade Kuri further elaborated that Mexico’s labor reform bill would end the current policy of company-sponsored unions, which are widely regarded as corrupt, and instead allow workers in Mexico to organize their own unions. This was a central campaign issue for Mexican President Andrés Manuel López Obrador and his radical socialist party MORENA, which enjoys a majority in both legislative chambers of Mexico’s Congress.

As we previously [reported](#) in *The New American*:





Written by [Christian Gomez](#) on April 5, 2019

Mexico's labor reform is intended to harmonize Mexico's labor regulations with those of the United States and Canada in order to hopefully prevent the outsourcing of both U.S. and Canadian jobs to Mexico, where manufacturers have been known to circumvent labor regulations. The Mexican labor-reform package is also expected to make it easier for workers in Mexico to unionize, and in turn earn higher wages. The idea is that if Mexican wages are high enough, and thus closer to wages in the United States, it would not be lucrative for companies to close their operations here and move to Mexico. This would protect American jobs, especially manufacturing jobs.

Last month, following a closed-door meeting between U.S. Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer and House Democrats, Representative Pramila Jayapal (D-Wash.) explained, "We know that when you don't have strong enforcement provisions, you are essentially facilitating the outsourcing of jobs and bad worker protections and undercutting of U.S. workers."

Ostensive political opposition to the USMCA by Democrats should not be conflated with any substantive opposition to the agreement, despite the fact that it abrogates American national sovereignty to international bodies and regimes such as the World Trade Organization, the International Labor Organization, and various UN conventions and treaties, or despite that Chapter 30 establishes an overarching "Free Trade Commission" akin to the European Union's governing European Commission.

These concerns are never brought up by Pelosi and congressional Democrats. Instead they quibble over how strongly the agreement's progressive facets would be enforced, which as Mexico's Seade Kuri suggested, can easily be reinforced and written into the implementation bill.

The fact that Mexico and Canada are unified in their opposition to reopening USMCA negotiations suggests that they are anxious to ratify it sooner than later, thus underscoring the urgency for patriots to act quickly if they hope to stop the USMCA.



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