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January 16, 2012

The Honorable John Boehner  
Speaker  
U.S. House of Representatives  
H-232  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Boehner:

Over the last two weeks, I have traveled my district meeting with local business leaders to discuss the needs of our economy. From town to town the message was consistent: Congress must put an end to partisanship and work together to promote pragmatic solutions that help American businesses and encourage economic growth.

In Western New York, we recognize that the engine of our economy will always be our local businesses. However, we also believe that government plays an important role in creating the conditions necessary for a strong economy. Therefore, just as businesses must innovate to compete in the global economy, so too must the federal government.

Last week, President Obama identified a prime opportunity for our government to innovate, eliminate waste, and provide more efficient assistance and service to American businesses. The President noted that six federal departments or agencies (the U.S. Department of Commerce, the Small Business Administration, the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative, the Export-Import Bank, the Overseas Private Investment Corporation, and the U.S. Trade and Development Agency) all share the basic mission of promoting business and trade.

In fact, in a 2011 study of 80 federal economic development programs at four agencies, the GAO found 54 separate programs that fund “entrepreneurial efforts which include helping businesses develop business plans and identify funding sources.”

This overlap and redundancy of mission not only is a prime source of waste and potential cost savings, but also creates a confusing maze of federal bureaucracy for small businesses looking

Eliminating wasteful spending and helping small businesses to grow and thrive are issues that both parties agree are critical to the future of our economy. Therefore, in your capacity of Speaker of the House, I respectfully request that you work on our behalf with the President and Minority Leader Pelosi to develop and execute a plan to consolidate duplicative economic development agencies and programs in an effort to find cost savings, as well as provide more efficient services to the businesses that drive our economy.

Sincerely,



Kathleen C. Hochul  
Member of Congress