

How a New Course on Cuba Can Help American Agriculture and Trade

Summary: Earlier this week, the President took historic steps to chart a new course in our relations with Cuba. Headlines and editorials from across the country show just how much opportunity there is to promote American agriculture and trade moving forward.

Earlier this week, the President took historic steps to chart a new course in our relations with Cuba. By empowering the Cuban people to gain greater economic independence, these steps will promote commercial diplomacy and create economic opportunities for hardworking Americans here at home.

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Headlines from across the country:

[AL – Anniston Star: Cuba thaw could mean more money for Alabama](#)

The announcement Wednesday that the United States will restore diplomatic relations with Cuba after more than five decades could mean more money pumped into Alabama economy, experts and state officials said. An embargo on trade with Cuba in place since 1962 hasn't been lifted, however, and if it were to be, those experts and officials say increased competition from other states won't hurt Alabama's trading with Cuba much, if at all.

[AL – Montgomery Advertiser: Alabama could benefit from U.S.-Cuba thaw](#)

Alabama ships roughly 32,000 tons of frozen chicken to Cuba each year, part of a broad economic relationship with Cuba that chiefly involves agricultural trade. President Barack Obama's announcement Wednesday that the United States would take steps toward normalizing relations with Cuba — which has been under a trade embargo from the United States since the early 1960s — could make it easier for Alabama to sell its goods in the island nation.

[AR – Arkansas Democrat Gazette: U.S. to mend ties with Cuba](#)

Arkansas agriculture and business groups applauded the Cuba trade, travel and diplomatic policy announced by President Barack Obama on Wednesday. Arkansas has pushed to improve relations with Cuba for decades. The state Legislature has repeatedly passed resolutions calling for Congress to lift its embargo on Cuba. Governors, members of Congress and industry leaders repeatedly have visited Cuba.

[AR – KATV Arkansas: Cuba policy could spell out big money for Ark. rice growers](#)

President Obama's call for open travel and commercial opportunities between Cuba and the U.S. is being met with criticism by some and excitement by others here at home. The move more than 50 years in the making is welcome news for Arkansas rice growers who would like to reunite with their once largest customer. On Wednesday, President Obama announced an update to the U.S. Cuba policy, including the reestablishment of diplomatic ties between the

two countries – including travel and commercial trade. Pre-embargo back in 1961, Cuba was the number one market for U.S. rice exports, and Arkansas rice growers would like to see that be the case again.

[FL – Florida Times-Union: If Cuba embargo lifted, Jacksonville mayor says more aggressively to be a trade hub with island](#)

Mayor Alvin Brown, who has banged the drum for boosting jobs through global trade, didn't take a position Thursday on whether he supports President Barack Obama's push to normalize relations with Cuba, which once was a major trading partner for Jacksonville's port. JaxPort's master plan already identifies Cuba as a potential market for future growth. "I think that all things considered, JaxPort is right there in the sweet spot," said JaxPort board member John Newman.

[FL – Panama City News Herald: Port Panama City looks toward Cuban trade](#)

As the U.S. government moves to ease trade restrictions with Cuba, officials at Port Panama City hope the action soon could help boost business at the facility. "We have been interested in attracting a shipping line to serve the Cuban trade for several years," Port Director Wayne Stubbs said Wednesday following the president's announcement. "We do think that Panama City is in a great location to service that trade ... if it is allowed to grow."

[FL – WJAX Jacksonville: JAXPORT could benefit from more trade with Cuba](#)

JAXPORT is the single most important port to the island of Puerto Rico. Port leaders have already established relationships in

the Caribbean, which is why JAXPORT spokeswoman Nancy Rubin said Cuba is a natural fit. "It's a natural flow, Jacksonville to the Caribbean to Puerto Rico and potentially back to Cuba," said Rubin. Before the Castro regime, JAXPORT was Cuba's main trading partner for goods to and from the U.S. mainland.

[FL – WTSP Tampa Bay: Port Manatee ready to do business with Cuba](#)

Normalizing trade relations between the US and Cuba is a day many have been preparing for especially at our ports. Port Manatee has a front-row seat for trade with Cuba and port Director Carlos Buqueras owes that to "proximity and access." Port Manatee is 300 miles from Cuba, closer than Tampa's port, and Buqueras says with a deeper port it's maintained at 41 feet it opens Port Manatee up for big business. "Cuba for Florida is a China sized opportunity," says Buqueras.

[IA – Des Moines Register: U.S. farmers to benefit from eased relations with Cuba](#)

Agriculture producers in Iowa and across the country are poised to benefit from the Obama administration's steps to normalize trade relations with Cuba, farm groups said Wednesday. They predicted poultry, corn and soybean farmers will prosper from better relations with the communist nation. The new policy announced by the White House on Wednesday will expand trade, increase travel, and establish diplomatic relations with Cuba's communist regime. Trade sanctions against Cuba have exempted food and agricultural exports since 2001. But rules on completing transactions — using cash isn't an option, for example, and

payments are required in advance — resulted in extra expense and time, complicating shipments of some products.

[IL – Bloomington Pantagraph: Ag interests, lawmakers back Cuba relations](#)

Illinois agricultural interests and some members of the state's congressional delegation welcomed — with reservations — President Barack Obama's announcement that he was normalizing relations with Cuba. Ken Hartman, recently elected president of the Illinois Corn Growers Association, said Thursday, “From the corn growers and agricultural point of view, we think this is very positive.” “This is a very good opportunity for Illinois soybean farmers and the businesses who use our beans,” said Illinois Soybean Growers Chairman Bill Raben, a soybean farmer from Ridgway. “This opens a lot of doors for both soybean and meat exports. We’re excited about exploring future trade opportunities with Cuba.”

[IL – The Times: Cuba could be beneficial for Illinois trade](#)

Caterpillar Inc. sees President Barack Obama's change in U.S. policy toward Cuba as a potential business opportunity. That opportunity is not limited to major manufacturers, said a Bradley University international trade expert. The policy changes also could open up more direct trade negotiations for Illinois businesses, even those in the Ottawa and Streator area, said Jim Foley, director of Illinois Small Business Development Center at Bradley. Bill Lane, the global government affairs director at Peoria-based Caterpillar, says the president's decision to establish diplomatic ties with the island nation is an important step.

[LA – Baton Rouge Advocate: How Louisiana could reap the benefits from a repaired relationship between U.S., Cuba](#)

Louisiana — already the country’s leading outlet for limited exports to Cuba — could benefit down the line from plans to re-establish diplomatic relations and expand the types of goods U.S. companies are allowed to sell to the communist country, several Louisiana officials said Wednesday. Former Gov. Kathleen Blanco, who led a four-day trade mission to Cuba in March 2005, said Louisiana is in a unique position to take advantage of Cuba opening up to trade. During her trip with 17 business people, Cuba and Louisiana signed a \$15 million trade deal in which Louisiana sold the island nation foodstuffs. “It was a one-way street. We sold; Louisiana businesses were advantaged,” she said.

[LA – Monroe News Star: Louisiana benefits from improved U.S.-Cuban relations](#)

One of the state’s largest rice growers praised Wednesday’s announcement of a possible improved relationship between the United States and Cuba saying it would provide an economic boost across Louisiana. Elton Kennedy of Morehouse Parish, perhaps the state's largest rice grower and a leader in the USA Rice Federation, hopes Congress will move forward in ending the embargo now that President Barack Obama said his administration would work toward resuming diplomatic relations and trade with Cuba for the first time in more than 50 years.

[LA – New Orleans Times-Picayune: U.S.-Cuba deal a cause for optimism](#)

The Obama administration's decision to restore diplomatic relations between the U.S. and Cuba and begin a serious debate about lifting the trade embargo could lead to positive developments for Louisiana's economy, according to local business leaders. Prior to the creation of the trade embargo in 1962, New Orleans was the U.S.'s largest trading partner with the communist nation. Port of New Orleans President and CEO Gary LaGrange suggested that tourism and trade between the city and Cuba could substantially improve if talks proceed.

[LA – Shreveport Times: Strain: Farmers would benefit by Cuba trade](#)

Resumed trade between the U.S. and Cuba would be of enormous benefit to Louisiana, which already ships some food to Cuba, high-ranking state leaders say. “They are hungry people, and they really need food,” Agriculture Commissioner Mike Strain said of the Cubans. In specific, Louisiana farmers could enjoy a “tremendous increase in market for poultry and rice,” which the state produces in abundance, if the U.S. and Cuba eventually resume trade relations. But other possibilities abound.

[MN – Minnesota Public Radio: After working against embargo, Cargill welcomes Cuba news](#)

President Barack Obama's announcement on Wednesday that the United States would begin normalizing relations with Cuba drew praise from some Minnesota residents and companies. Farm interests in Minnesota would particularly like to see more opportunities to do business in Cuba, which has 11 million people. One Minnesota company that has been working to change that is Twin Cities-based Cargill,

one of the nation's largest food and commodity companies. At Cargill, the presidential announcement was welcome news, Vice President of Corporate Affairs Devry Boughner-Vorwerk said.

[MO – St. Louis Post-Dispatch: Midwestern farmers eye Cuban market possibilities](#)

Midwestern farmers may have reason for optimism after years of pushing for expanded trade with Cuba. Growers in Illinois and Missouri long have looked upon the U.S. neighbor as a natural market — one that's easy to reach through New Orleans, Georgia and Florida. "It's a short jaunt over to Havana," said Duane Dahlman, a soybean farmer in Marengo, Ill., and marketing committee chairman for the Illinois Soybean Association.

[MS – Biloxi-Gulfport Sun Herald: South Mississippi positioned to benefit from trade with Cuba](#)

With shipping ports in Pascagoula and Gulfport already processing humanitarian-aid exports to Cuba, South Mississippi is in an advantageous position to benefit economically from any easing of trade restrictions between Cuba and the United States. President Barack Obama's announcement Wednesday of plans to loosen the long-standing U.S. isolation of Cuba included a part concerning the expansion of U.S. commercial sales and exports of certain goods. Items authorized under the pending expansion would include, among other things, "goods for use by private sector Cuban entrepreneurs," according to a fact sheet contained in the White House press release. While other Americans may be thinking of Cuban cigars,

Mississippi State Port Authority CEO Jonathan Daniels is thinking of jobs.

[MT –Billings Gazette: Normalized relations with Cuba could be a plus for Montana farmers](#)

Montana farmers were watching closely as President Barack Obama announced plans Wednesday to normalize diplomatic relations with Cuba. Shortly after Obama and Cuban President Raul Castro announced the policy shift, the U.S. Department of Agriculture was declaring normalized relations a positive step for agriculture trade. Cuba was a top buyer of U.S. farm products before the United States cut ties with the nation in 1963. The country located about 100 miles off the Florida coast imports most of its food, the USDA estimates.

[NE – Lincoln Journal-Star: Nebraska eyes Cuban markets](#)

On a wall of the historic Hotel Nacional de Cuba in Havana, hanging among pictures of luminaries like Nat King Cole and Rita Hayworth, is the image of Gov. Dave Heineman. Heineman visited Cuba in 2005, 2006 and 2007 to sign \$70 million worth of agricultural export deals. While those contracts were filled, trade eventually dwindled because U.S. restrictions on trade with the Communist country required all deals to be done with cash up front, an onerous requirement for a country where cash is in tight supply. Renewing those economic ties began to look more feasible Wednesday after President Barack Obama announced plans to restore diplomatic and economic ties with the island nation.

[ND – AP: ND officials eager to expand trade with Cuba; state grows commodities popular in Cuban diet](#)

Officials from North Dakota are applauding the Obama administration's move to restore diplomatic relations with Cuba. North Dakota has long viewed the communist island nation as a market for crops such as dry peas, lentils and potatoes, which are grown in abundance in the state and are big parts of the Cuban diet. Some North Dakota commodities have been sold there in recent years through a humanitarian exemption to the U.S. trade embargo.

[ND – Grand Forks Herald: Easing of Cuba restrictions creates opportunity for Upper Midwest agriculture](#)

FARGO — Officials say an agreement to normalize diplomatic relations between the United States and Cuba could lead to improved trade possibilities and important opportunities for agriculture in the Upper Midwest. U.S. Sen. Heidi Heitkamp, D-N.D., said the reopening of an embassy in Havana and easing of some travel and commerce restrictions are the beginning of things to come. “It's going to go a long way toward making agricultural trade with Cuba more streamlined and accessible,” Heitkamp said. She said the most important change is that traders “can go bank-to-bank and don't have to jump through Canada or somewhere to do business” with Cuba.

[OK – The Norman Transcript: Cuba policy has implications in unexpected places](#)

Iowa isn't the first state you think of when the topic of the U.S. and Cuba comes up. But Wednesday's announcement that the U.S. and Cuba will normalize relations could wind up giving

Iowa a major boost. Chalk it up to agriculture. Bob Bowman said Iowa farmers stand to benefit, along with several other Iowa industries. And Bowman should know. He's a DeWitt farmer, chairman of the Iowa Corn Promotion board and serves on the Corn Board of the National Corn Grower's Association. He also has firsthand experience in Cuba.

[SD – Argus Leader: South Dakota farmers to benefit from eased relations with Cuba](#)

Agriculture producers in South Dakota and across the country are poised to benefit from the Obama administration's steps to normalize trade relations with Cuba, farm groups said this week. They predicted that South Dakota cattle, sheep and hog producers will prosper from better relations with the communist nation. Farm and ranch groups said the move to expand trade with Cuba was long overdue. "The embargo against Cuba had been going on longer than 40 years with little to show for it," said Doug Sombke, president of the South Dakota Farmers Union. "It's time to make changes that will not only help the people of Cuba, but will also open new markets for family farmers here in South Dakota and across the United States, who are always interested in new trade opportunities."

[TX – Beaumont Enterprise: SE Texas rice farmers optimistic about end to Cuba embargo](#)

An elderly woman working at a Havana market ran up to Nick Lampson, hugged him and offered her thanks for the then-congressman's effort to bring back the high-quality, cheap rice that she once had on her table. Lampson said he traveled to Cuba in 1999 with Southeast Texas rice farmers to meet with then-President Fidel Castro and his

government in an attempt to call for renewed agricultural trade between the United States and Cuba. Before a 1960s trade embargo, Cuba imported virtually all of its rice from the U.S., Lampson said. Americans and Cubans alike have longed for five decades to repair the divide, Lampson said on Wednesday, hours after President Barack Obama announced the re-establishment of diplomatic relations with Cuba.

[TX – Amarillo Globe-News: Texas businesses could benefit from improved Cuba correspondence](#)

To no one's surprise, President Barack Obama's historic decision to begin the normalization of relations with Cuba — which includes ending a half-century trade embargo — was sharply criticized by congressional Republicans. But one powerful group that welcomed Wednesday's presidential announcement was the Texas business community. "As far as I am concerned it is a very good thing for Texas," said Bill Hammond, CEO of the Texas Association of Business, one of the most influential groups in Austin. "It's a brand new market for the goods and services produced in Texas, whether it is oil and gas or agriculture," Hammond said. "The rice farmers have long wanted to be able to export rice to Cuba.

Editorials from across the country:

[AL – Anniston Star: Alabama and Cuba](#)

Few states are positioned better than Alabama to take advantage of the thawing relationship between the United States and Cuba. By shipping standards, we're close. We have an active and ample international Gulf Coast port. We produce

goods and livestock ready for export. And we already have a business relationship with Cuban interests — as much as U.S. law will allow. America's policy of Cuban isolation is more than 50 years old and it hasn't worked. The Castro family remains in charge. The trade embargo, which only Congress can remove, has damaged the island nation but hasn't changed its behavior. Likewise, the embargo has kept Southern states like Alabama from fully tapping into what should be a prime trading partner.

[CA – Fresno Bee: Obama's approach is best way to help Cubans, promote democracy](#)

To say the reset of U.S. policy toward Cuba is long overdue is a vast understatement. For more than 50 years, economic sanctions and travel restrictions have had little impact on making Cuba's government less repressive or improving the lives of the people. Cuba is not going to turn into a democracy overnight. Nor will it quickly become a close U.S. ally, if ever. But President Barack Obama is absolutely correct that the way to help Cuba's people is through closer economic ties and more human engagement — not less.

[CA – San Diego Union-Times: A gamble on Cuba that's worth taking](#)

President Barack Obama's surprise announcement Wednesday that the U.S. and Cuba would seek to normalize relations after a 55-year chill — and after 18 months of secret negotiations assisted by Canada and encouraged by Pope Francis — is a gamble worth taking. "Isolation has not worked," the president said. "We will end an outdated approach that, for decades, has failed to advance our interests." The hope is that increased U.S. engagement,

investment and tourism in Cuba achieves what sanctions and diplomatic pressure could not: moving our Caribbean neighbor away from authoritarian communism and toward democracy, open government and broad acceptance of basic human rights.

[CA – Santa Rosa Press Democrat: Taking a new direction with Cuba](#)

For more than five decades, the United States ignored Cuba where it could, ostracized the Cuban government when it couldn't be ignored and hoped that the Castro regime would just disappear. President Barack Obama's decision this week to restore diplomatic relations and roll back restrictions on travel and trade with Cuba isn't an act of capitulation. It isn't extending the U.S. imprimatur for a totalitarian government in the Caribbean. Obama simply acknowledged the obvious. The Cold War approach didn't work. A different strategy — engagement — is long overdue.

[CO – Denver Post: Obama right to reset Cuba policy](#)

In his speech Tuesday, Obama made a persuasive case that restoring relations makes sense. We have diplomatic relations with China, he noted, another communist dictatorship — and with Vietnam, where tens of thousands of Americans died trying to check a communist regime. But the biggest reason, as Obama said, is that the policy hasn't worked for more than 50 years. The Castros remain in power. "These 50 years have shown that isolation has not worked," Obama said. "It's time for a new approach."

[FL – Orlando Sentinel: Bold Cuba move creates opportunity](#)

This is the door that's taken more than five decades to open.

Actually, President Barack Obama's call for normalizing relations with Cuba is more than a door; it's a historic opportunity for a more-effective U.S. strategy to ease decades of tension and promote reform on the island. There are good, practical reasons for normalizing relations, from better trade, especially given the recent upgrades at Cuba's harbor in Mariel; to environmental concerns, especially given Cuba's plans for deep-water oil exploration not far off our coast; to improved coordination on weather emergencies, especially given the sweep of killer hurricanes.

[FL – Palm Beach Post: Time for new U.S.-Cuba policy, start by ending the embargo](#)

President Barack Obama, after months of secret negotiations, has ordered the restoration of full diplomatic relations with Cuba. The president also eased travel restrictions and expanded economic ties. We applaud these bold moves and encourage the president and Congress to go further and end the economic embargo. The economic isolation has been ineffective, and continues as one of the longest-maintained foreign-policy failures of the modern American era.

[FL – Sun-Sentinel: Embrace opportunity for change with Cuba](#)

This is the door that's taken more than five decades to open.

Actually, President Obama's call for normalizing relations with Cuba is more than a door, it's an opportunity for a new era of cooperation with our island neighbor across the Florida Straits. It's an opportunity that should be embraced. Cuba's release of American aid worker Alan Gross, in

exchange for America's release of three Cuban prisoners, surprised the world Wednesday and was a welcome signal that after 54 years, our neighboring nations might finally find a way forward together.

[FL – Tampa Bay Times: Obama's new Cuba policy long past due, good for Florida](#)

President Barack Obama began burying the last vestiges of the Cold War by ordering the restoration of diplomatic ties with Cuba. The bold and sweeping measure will expose Cubans to democracy, open trade opportunities for the United States, particularly in Florida, and strengthen America's influence in the Western Hemisphere. This day was inevitable and a long time coming, and critics such as Sen. Marco Rubio are out of touch with reality and on the wrong side of history.

[FL – Tampa Bay Tribune: A way to advance freedom in Cuba](#)

Improving relations with Cuba should bolster the United States' influence and advance the cause of freedom. The agreement President Obama reached with Cuba with the help of the Canadian government and Pope Francis will, among other things, revive U.S. diplomatic relations with the island nation, ease travel restrictions, increase telecommunications connections between the countries, expand U.S. exports of certain goods to Cuba and review Cuba's designation as a state sponsor of terrorism. The president is making these policy revisions through executive order, but only Congress can get rid of the Cuban embargo it adopted in 1961. This provides an incentive for good behavior.

[IA – Quad-City Times: Obama initiates a 21st Century solution](#)

After 50 years of blame and shame, we're heartened to see a Cuban foreign policy directive that respects Americans and Cubans as they are today, two generations removed from the near calamity of 1962. That episode merited the caution that isolated Cuba for decades. Castro and his regime were untrustworthy. His seizure of private property remains undemocratic and unjust. The results of his reign are obvious to anyone who has witnessed Cuba's poverty and isolation. But grudges make for poor policy.

[KY – Louisville Courier-Journal: Hello, Cuba. It's about time.](#)

But the United States has spent the past 50-plus years toeing the naysayers' line, trying to change Cuba from the outside in, rather from the inside out, and it hasn't worked. It has split families, increased hardships on Cubans and even strengthened the dictators' hold on power. Indeed, Fidel Castro — as today's editorial cartoon notes — has outlasted 10 U.S. presidents. The 11th had the good sense to break with the past and try something different, something that has worked with other countries with whom we have profound differences but still manage to have diplomatic and trade relations.

[LA – New Orleans Times Picayune: U.S. engagement with Cuba ought to lead to an end of the embargo](#)

Before the United States embargo on trade with Cuba began in 1962, New Orleans was one of the biggest U.S. trading partners with that island nation. So the announcement from President Barack Obama Wednesday that the United States is reestablishing a diplomatic relationship with Cuba has the

potential to benefit our region. Gary LaGrange, president and CEO of the Port of New Orleans, said if the president's announcement leads to real changes, then travel and trade between New Orleans and Cuba could give this city's economy a boost.

[MA – The Republican: Changed policy toward Cuba a recognition of reality](#)

Our nation's trade embargo against Cuba has been in place during the administrations of fully one-quarter of all U.S. presidents in history – 11 out of 44. Any question about the efficacy of the embargo can begin, and end, right there. President Barack Obama's move to normalize relations with Cuba does not end the embargo – only Congress can do that – but it is, by any measure, a sweeping change, a clear recognition that what we'd been doing had not been working. We will be reopening our embassy in Havana, easing travel restrictions, paving the way for increased business dealings.

[NJ – Star-Ledger: Pres. Obama is right to shake things up with Cuba](#)

President Obama's decision to restore full diplomatic relations with Cuba, lifting restrictions on travel, was a promising first step. This stops short of lifting the embargo, a logical next move that most Americans support, but would require an act of Congress. Still, it gives millions of Cubans who have suffered decades of harsh isolation new reason to hope. The President's announcement brings joy not only to Cubans, but to Americans who can now travel there more easily. And let this be a cue for Congress: It's time we ended the embargo, too.

[NH – Concord Monitor: New chapter begins for U.S., Cuba](#)

What Obama cannot do without congressional action is lift a trade embargo that Cuba claims has resulted in total economic damages of more than a trillion dollars. While many lawmakers will resist lifting the blockade – Florida Sen. Marco Rubio called normalized relations “another concession to tyranny” – they should realize that the president is right to look to the future rather than back toward an unrecognizable past. It makes little sense to base foreign policy on a world that no longer exists, and there are more effective ways to influence undemocratic societies than blindly clinging to an ineffective strategy of isolation. The time has come for the United States and Cuba to begin healing old wounds and building a future that benefits the people of that long-suffering island and their friends and family who fled long ago. Obama should be applauded for allowing that process to begin.

[NE – Lincoln Journal Star: A beneficial move on Cuba](#)

Nebraskans have first-hand experience with the benefits of expanded trade with Cuba. The normalization of relations with the island nation only 90 miles away announced Wednesday by President Barack Obama brightens prospects for more in the future. It also raises hopes that rolling back restrictions on American contact will be more successful in loosening communist control in Cuba than 54 years of sanctions and a strict embargo have produced.

[TN – Memphis Commercial Appeal: Obama’s policy shift on Cuba is long overdue](#)

The restoration of diplomatic relations between the United States and Cuba is decades overdue. Once the Cuban missile crisis, a truly dangerous flash point between the United States and the Soviet Union, had blown over, it became clear that the full-scale U.S. trade embargo against Cuba was not going to force regime change; instead, it became an all-purpose scapegoat for the failures of Havana's experiments with communism.

[TX – Beaumont Enterprise: Expanded rice sales to Cuba worth pursuing](#)

Southeast Texas will be represented by two conservative Republicans in the U.S. House in January along with the state's two conservative Republican senators. And those Republicans aren't thrilled by President Obama's decision to restore diplomatic relations with Cuba and end the long-standing trade embargo. But Rep. Randy Weber in District 14 and Rep. Brian Babin in District 36 should put aside any partisan feelings on this issue when it comes to expanded rice sales to Cuba. The same goes for Sen. John Cornyn and Sen. Ted Cruz. If there's anything these officials can do to help make this happen, they should do it.

[TX – Dallas Morning News: At long last, U.S. is unfreezing relations with Cuba](#)

Cuba and the United States are normalizing relations, reopening embassies and restoring economic ties after more than half a century of diplomatic freeze. The leaders of both countries are heralding a new era, symbolized by prisoner exchanges that include the release of an unidentified U.S. intelligence agent held more than 20 years. A nearly 54-year-old, unilateral U.S. embargo has failed to unhinge Cuba's

Communist dictatorship. Although President Barack Obama's executive action will ease trade restrictions, only an act of Congress will end the embargo. Texas businesses should recognize this opportunity and press members of Congress to stop impeding their ability to generate economic growth.

[UT – Salt Lake Tribune: Obama right to end Cuba policy](#)

A key moment in Cold War mythology is the lore of what happened during the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962. Upon hearing that the Soviet Union was backing down on its plans to install more nuclear missiles in Cuba, Secretary of State Dean Rusk was supposed to have said, "We were eyeball to eyeball, and the other fellow just blinked." Fifty years is a long time to engage in a pointless staring contest. That is why President Obama was right to announce Wednesday that he would establish more-or-less normal diplomatic relations with the Cuban government and do what he could under his own authority to normalize relations with that tiny, poor and abused Caribbean island nation.

Fuente: <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/blog/2014/12/19/what-theyre-saying-how-new-course-cuba-can-help-american-agriculture-and-trade>