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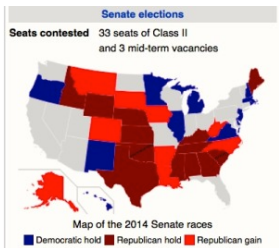
## TPP conclusion near, New Congressional leaders support TPA/TPP, TET Holidays

### FEATURES



#### U.S. Trade Representative pushes to conclude TPP

"The endgame is a long game," U.S. Trade Representative Michael Froman said in a recent interview, "but we're in that endgame." Representative Sander Levin, the ranking Democrat on the Ways and Means Committee, which has jurisdiction on trade wants to work on the finest details of the TPP.



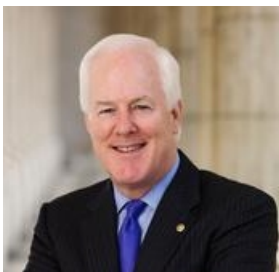
#### U.S. elections results in Nov 2014 improve TPP outlook

The Republican Party made sweeping gains in the Senate, House, and in numerous gubernatorial, state, and local races. Overall, the elections resulted in the largest Republican majority in the country in nearly a century, with 54 of 100 seats in the Senate, 247 of 435 (56.78%) in the House of Representatives, 31 of 50 governorships (62%), and 68 state legislative chambers. Moreover, Republicans gained their largest majority in the House since 1928, the largest majority in Congress overall since 1928, and the largest majority of state legislatures since 1928. Generally speaking, Republican lawmakers are more in favor of trade agreements than are Democratic.



#### New U.S. Congressional Leaders support TPA and TPP

New leaders of both the House and Senate have cited trade as a top bipartisan priority for the new year. In new U.S. Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell's (R-KY) first official remarks, he noted the president has "already indicated a willingness to work with us on trade and infrastructure and comprehensive tax reform. Navigating the political pitfalls won't be easy. But passing these types of things would represent a win for the American people."



#### No. 2 Republican senator says TPP is "on a two month trajectory"

The top U.S. trade official, Michael Froman, told lawmakers a major trade pact with Pacific Rim trading partners is "on a two-month trajectory," the No. 2 Republican in the U.S. Senate said on Tuesday, although the trade office said there was no set timeline for the deal. "On the Trans-Pacific Partnership, the U.S. Trade Representative has been calling a number of us and saying that he thinks we are sort of on a two-month trajectory to getting something he'd like us to take up in Congress," Senator John Cornyn told reporters.

#### Top U.S. State Department official says TPP conclusion near

Assistant Secretary of State Daniel Russell said a deal in the long-running TPP talks seemed to be in



sight, requiring a big push in Congress to pass Trade Promotion Authority, which would ease passage of the agreement once it is wrapped. "Our negotiators have made a lot of progress on the talks in recent months, and we believe the end of the negotiations is coming into focus," he said. "This is important to longtime allies like Australia, with whom we've had an FTA for a decade now," he said. "It's important to Japan as [Prime Minister Shinzo] Abe works on structural reforms, the 'third arrow' of his domestic economic recovery program. And it's important to newer partners like Vietnam; 2015 marks 20 years of normalized relations, and TPP will take us to the next level."

## Events, Meetings, Special Offers



### **EVA Air again ranks among World's Top-10 Safest Full-Service Airlines**

For the second consecutive year, EVA Air is ranked as one of world's top-10 safest full-service airlines by websiteAirlineRatings.com. Others in the top-10 in alphabetical order are: Air New Zealand, Cathay Pacific Airways, British Airways, Emirates, Etihad Airways, Finnair, Lufthansa, Qantas and Singapore Airlines. EVA has achieved and maintained its rating by meeting the website's strict safety criteria. More about the website's safety assessments for 2015 is available at [www.AirlineRatings.com](http://www.AirlineRatings.com).



### **Jan 19 - 25, Reflections gets grilling for U.S. Beef week**

Have your steak and eat it too at Reflections Fine Dining week-long U.S. Beef Promotion. From 19th - 25th January, Caravelle's atmospheric fine-dining experience, Reflections, is welcoming carnivores with a special menu of prime U.S. Beef. Diners can choose from three cuts, rib-eye or Black Angus strip loin, ranging in weight of 150 to 350 grams. Each cut is expertly cooked over a charcoal-heated iron grill, and presented with a choice of traditional condiments & sauces.



### **Korean Air - Daily flight between Seoul & Houston from May**

Korean Air, America's largest Asian airline, is launching daily flight between Seoul and Houston from May 2015. More on Korean Air's programs, routes, frequencies and partners is available at [www.koreanair.com](http://www.koreanair.com)



### **Jan 20, Smoothing Your Exporting to U.S. and EU Markets**

AmCham Vietnam and AIG Vietnam are organizing an executive roundtable discussion to support our US and EU Sourcing Agents and Companies by providing critical information you need to know when requesting your suppliers to meet the insurance contractual requirements and D&B solution to ensure a smooth exporting journey.

**Sourcing Agents and Companies based in Vietnam for US and EU markets are welcome to join us this event.**

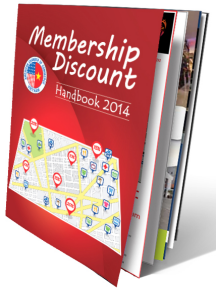


### **Jan 28, AmCham Palooza Party at Movenpick Hotel Saigon**

AmCham will continue its series of monthly informal networking events at the coolest and latest nightspots in Ho Chi Minh City. The monthly Palooza Party is a platform to develop new friendships, networking opportunities and information exchange. People from all age groups are welcome to attend - there's no age limit, you just have to be young at heart! Come and join us for a night of casual networking, meet other professionals, bring your business cards!

### **AmCham Member Discounts Program**

The AmCham Member Discounts Program is provided as one of our Membership Benefits. It serves as a mutually beneficial opportunity for both AmCham Members and AmCham Discount Partners. Members must present their AmCham Membership Card to receive special, privileged discounts offered by AmCham Discount Partners. A listing of discount offers is available in the annual Membership Discount Handbook (hardcopy) and on the AmCham website.



## Networking Opportunities with AmCham HCMC

AmCham HCMC offers many opportunities to market your company's products and services to AmCham members, the business community and the general public. Our services include:

- Event Sponsorship
- Event Management Support
- Network (Advertise) on AmCham's website: plus 7.8k twitter followers, 5.7k facebook fans
- Announcement in Weekly Email: 4,500+ AmCham company representatives and subscribers.

**AmCham Companies are offered 3 complimentary announcements in 2015.**

- Print advertising in AmCham Membership Directory
- Print advertising in AmCham Membership Discount Handbook
- Advertising on AmCham Discount Online

## News and Issues Updates



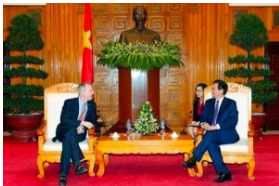
### TET Lunar New Year - Year of the Goat - Official Holidays Feb 15 ~ 23

Traditionally, there are five main days of celebration: Tét New Year's Eve (Feb 17), and The First (Feb 18), Second (Feb 19), Third (Feb 20), and Fourth (Feb 21) of Tết Nguyên Đán. Officially, the holidays are Feb 17 - 23, but the Government decided at its regular November meeting to make the government offices' holidays period nine days. Government officials will work on Sat, Feb 14 in order to have nine days of holidays from Sun, Feb 15, to Mon, Feb 23.



### 2015 APCAC Business Summit, Singapore, Mar 11-13

The Asia-Pacific Council of American Chambers of Commerce (APCAC) and the American Chamber of Commerce in Singapore are pleased to host the 2015 APCAC Business Summit. The theme, "The United States and Asia - New Opportunities in the Pacific Century," builds on previous summits' themes about Asia's growth and global influence. Held at the Marina Bay Sands Expo and Convention Centre March 11-13, 2015, the conference offers a valuable opportunity to gather with peers and government officials and experience Singapore during its 50th anniversary celebration.



### Prime Minister receives new U.S. Ambassador Osius

Amb Osius expressed hope that the TPP would be concluded in Mar 2015 and submitted to Congress for approval in May. The U.S. expects to become largest trade and investment partner with Vietnam; moreover, the US also supports Viet Nam's viewpoints on regional security issues and is making efforts for the full removal of arms sale ban on Viet Nam, he said. Prime Minister Dung said Viet Nam attaches importance to the Comprehensive Partnership relations with the U.S. and expects to promote the relationship more effectively to contribute to international and regional peace, stability, cooperation and development.



### Internet slow? ... yet another internet cable cut

In 2014, the AAG cable was cut three times, slowing down Internet speeds when Vietnamese users utilized services hosted overseas: first cut on July 16, again on September 15. On September 29, with the second rupture yet to be repaired, a third break was found on the same cable section. The long estimated repair time, up to one month, makes the rupture, on section S1H, which connects the Vietnamese coastal city of Vung Tau and Hong Kong, of the AAG (Asia Gateway Pacific) cable system, one of the most serious such incidents.



## AmCham & Association of Vietnam Retailers: Food Safety Seminar Presentations

AmCham's Food & Beverage Committee recently organized a Seminar on "Food Safety: Responsibilities of Manufacturers, Distributors, Retailers" together with the Association of Vietnam Retailers (AVR) to promote understanding of food safety in Vietnam's economic and social environment. The aim of the seminar was to connect members of supply chains, food safety regulators, manufacturers, distributors, retailers and consumers; sharing and discussing about issues and concerns regarding food safety. This was also an opportunity for participants to exchange information, to enhance mutual understanding, and to raise awareness and their responsibility regarding food safety.



## TPP Investment: Taiwan's United Textile builds textile industrial park in An Giang

Taiwan's United Textile Co. Ltd. broke ground for a \$100 million garment factory in the Mekong province of An Giang on Dec 23, 2014. The facility will be built in two phases. In the first phase, United Textile will build eight factories (workshops), eight warehouses and other facilities on 54.7ha and employ some 12,000 workers out of the 29,000 it is eventually expected to hire. The company said the total investment in the project would go up to \$500 million if things go smoothly.



## Vietnam's New Housing Law - Presentations

Vietnam is preparing to take a big step forward in opening its market to foreigners wishing to buy homes, second homes or investment properties here. As of July 1, the Housing Law's new rules allowing foreign ownership of certain types of villas and condos will mark a significant advance from the past "pilot program" that offered more limited rights to foreign buyers. Of course, there are important restrictions on such purchases, and many questions remain to be addressed in detailed implementing rules. In the meantime, the move has already breathed new life into the troubled property market, introducing hopes of greater liquidity and a stronger market generally, with spin off benefits for the design and construction industry, management service providers, and financial institutions. Click the link to view and download the presentations.



## AmCham Supplier Day - Presentations

AmCham's Manufacturing Committee organized a "Supplier Day" to support AmCham manufacturing members' efforts to expand the list of qualified local suppliers. The event also provided an opportunity for well-qualified suppliers to meet potential AmCham customers in the manufacturing sector and to grow their business. Sponsored by Datalogic and Long Hau Industrial Park, the event attracted nearly 200 participants from both AmCham manufacturing leaders and representatives from the local supply chain. Intel Products Vietnam and Di Central Vietnam opened the event with presentations of on-line guidance for suppliers and electronic data interchange (EDI) between buyers and suppliers. In the second session, networking opportunities for both manufacturers and suppliers were offered. The key objective in the second session was to provide business conversations between AmCham manufacturers and pre-registered, screened and qualified Vietnam suppliers.



## U.S.-backed Alliance to Facilitate Trade through Public-Private Dialogue

The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) joined the American Chamber of Commerce in Vietnam and the Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry to establish a new Vietnam Trade Facilitation Alliance (VTFA) through a memorandum of understanding. The private sector-led alliance will provide policy and technical assistance to the General Department of Vietnam Customs and relevant trade facilitation agencies and authorities in Vietnam to advance Vietnam's competitiveness.



## World Bank: Taking Stock; Recent Economic Developments in Vietnam, Dec 2014

The performances of foreign-invested and domestic firms remain dichotomous. The foreign-invested sector continues to be a significant source of growth, and accounts for nearly 20 percent of GDP, 22 percent of total investment, supplies two thirds of merchandise exports and provides a quarter of employment in the enterprise sector. Vietnam's manufacturing sector continues to be the main draw for foreign investors: manufacturing accounts for 70 percent of registered FDI. At the same time, a rising number of domestically-owned businesses have been closing or suspending operations.

## AmCham Vietnam - HCMC received Prime Minister's Certificates of Merit

At AmCham's 20th Anniversary Celebration Dinner on September 18, 2014, Vice Chairman of HCMC





People's Committee Le Thanh Liem handed the Prime Minister's Certificates of Merit to AmCham Vietnam - HCM City and to Mr. Herb Cochran, Executive Director for their excellent performance in supporting and promoting trade and investment in Ho Chi Minh City.

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