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Letter From William Howard Taft to Francis Emroy Warren, June 15, 1912

William Howard Taft

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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

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June 15, 1912

My dear Senator Warren:

I consider it of great importance to our international relations and to the welfare of our business and all other interests affected directly or indirectly by our international relations that the reorganized Department of State be not disturbed in the status in which it is left by the Senate's action upon the Legislative, Executive and Judicial Bill.

There was a time when I was inclined to think that the Bureau of Trade Relations in the State Department and the Bureau of Manufactures and of Statistics in the Department of Commerce and Labor were an instance of duplication that might be removed, but further study of the situation satisfies me that the amount of duplication is very small as compared with the great injury to the usefulness of the Department of State which a transfer of the Bureau of Trade Relations to the Department of Commerce and Labor would involve.

I think it conduces to the symmetry and effectiveness of government to unite in one Department all of our foreign relations, whether they concern diplomacy or merely commerce and its details. The Department of Commerce and Labor is an important one, and should have under its general observation for statistical purposes the commerce of the country, both foreign and domestic, to the promotion of which it should give the benefit of its assistance. This, however, presents no reason

why when it ventures into foreign fields it should not do so through the agency of the Department which was originally created and has always been maintained for the purpose of observing, preserving and regulating our foreign relations.

I seriously object to establishing a direct relation between the Department of Commerce and Labor and our consuls. I think the channel from one to the other ought to be through the State Department, so that the State Department can keep a proper control and discipline over the men who are appointed as part of that Department under a system of selection which has commended itself to the country at large and which is completely in charge of the State Department. It may be that there are some clerks who duplicate work in the Bureau of Manufactures and the Bureau of Trade Relations, but these easily can be dispensed with, and I doubt if after a union and reorganization of the two bureaus of Manufactures and Statistics, it will be found that there is any such duplication.

I am going to send a report of the Economy and Efficiency Commission, in which the union of the Bureau of Trade Relations with the Bureau of Manufactures and the Bureau of Statistics is recommended. I agree with part of the report, but not with that part of it which provides for the elimination of the Bureau of Trade Relations from the State Department. I think the Bureau of Manufactures and the Bureau of Statistics ought to be

to be united, but I think the State Department ought to contain, as an instrumentality of its usefulness, which it has made manifest in the last two years, the Bureau of Trade Relations.

Sincerely yours,

(Sgd) Wm. H. Taft.

Hon. F. E. Warren,
United States Senate.