

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**CUBAN FEMALE ENTREPRENEURS ASK IVANKA TRUMP FOR SUPPORT**

*~ Following* [*reports*](http://www.latimes.com/nation/la-fg-trump-cuba-20170611-story.html) *that POTUS will roll back Cuba policy this Friday, Cuban women business leaders urge Ivanka Trump to support U.S. policies that have helped Cuban women in the island's private sector ~*

Havana, Cuba - Today, 55 Cuban female entrepreneurs [sent a letter](http://engagecuba.org/s/Cuentapropista-Letter-Trump.pdf) to Ivanka Trump seeking her support for U.S. policies that have empowered Cuban women and their families across the island. As a successful businesswoman and champion of female entrepreneurship around the globe, the women invite Ms. Trump to visit the island to see first hand how U.S. policies that expanded travel to and trade with Cuba have empowered Cuban women and strengthened Cuba's growing private sector.

The letter serves as a plea to Ivanka following reports that President Trump is set to roll back Cuba policies. *"A setback in the relationship would bring with it the fall of many of our businesses and with this, the suffering of all those families that depend on them,"* **the women wrote to Ms. Trump.**

*"There are hundreds of thousands of Cuban women working in the private sector. Today we are owners of boutique hotels, BnBs, restaurants and shops. We are designers, photographers and computer programmers, and much more. On behalf of Cuba’s female entrepreneurs, we ask for your support,"* **they added.**

"If President Trump really cares about helping the Cuban people, these are the voices he should be listening to. These women's businesses, their lives, and their families will be affected by this policy," **said President of Engage Cuba, James Williams**.

“Our U.S. opening to Cuba has significantly benefited female entrepreneurs and their families,” **said Collin Laverty, President of Cuba Educational Travel.** “Cutting off travel and trade would be cutting off their economic lifeline, and causing real harm to their families.”

A recent [survey](https://static1.squarespace.com/static/55806c54e4b0651373f7968a/t/58f1055cbe6594f0ff6bb44e/1492190556666/CET%2BTravel%2BSurvey.pdf) conducted by Public Opinion Strategies found that over 75% of U.S. travelers stay in privately-owned bed and breakfasts, eat at private restaurants and purchase goods from private artisans and artists.

Airbnb recently released a [report](https://2sqy5r1jf93u30kwzc1smfqt-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/Airbnb_CubaReport_2017.pdf) citing that Cuban individuals have earned $40 million over the last two years sharing their homes on Airbnb. The report also highlighted that 58% of Airbnb hosts in Cuba are women.

More information on Cuba's growing private sector is available [here](https://www.engagecuba.org/cubas-private-sector/).

**The text of the letter is available** [**here**](https://static1.squarespace.com/static/55806c54e4b0651373f7968a/t/593eecb9cd0f683cb1f08d3b/1497296057661/Cuentapropista%2BLetter%2BTrump.pdf) **and below:**

*June 13, 2017

Dear Ivanka Trump,

Your passion to help female entrepreneurship around the world has been very inspiring for Cuban entrepreneurs. As women entrepreneurs in Cuba, it is a great honor to send you this message. We are reaching out to introduce you to our reality and to strengthen the relationship between our countries. We also write to you with great concern that U.S. policy toward Cuba might be headed backward, in turn threatening our economic livelihoods and the overall wellbeing of Cubans on and off the island.

For many years, entrepreneurship, small businesses, and the private sector were almost nonexistent in Cuba. However, over the last several years they have begun to flourish. Still incipient, we can see accelerated development and growth of small businesses in the country. Millions of Cubans have benefited from this private sector growth, including higher wages, better quality products and services, innovation, and the ability to dream about the future.

Undoubtedly, the restoration of relations between Cuba and the United States has been key to the success of the private sector. Many businesses have been directly influenced by increased U.S. visits, improved telecommunications, and the introduction of new U.S. products and services. Other businesses have also been stimulated indirectly by the resuscitation of the domestic economy in general. A setback in the relationship would bring with it the fall of many of our businesses and with this, the suffering of all those families that depend on them.

Much of the growth has been led by Cuban women. There are hundreds of thousands of Cuban women working in the private sector. Today we are owners of boutique hotels, B&Bs, restaurants, and shops. We are designers, photographers, and computer programmers, and much more. On behalf of Cuba’s female entrepreneurs, we ask for your support.

We hope you, as a successful businesswoman, understand the valuable contribution that the exchange of trade, people, and ideas represents for our businesses. An alliance between women would not only contribute to the stability of the private sector, but would also open a new chapter in relations between our countries.

We would like you to accept our sincere and warm invitation. Come to Cuba and get to know our companies, which we have built with our own efforts and that make us prouder by the day. Please support travel, trade, and exchanges between our two countries.

Thank you for your interest and dedication to women. Thank you for building bridges worldwide. We really appreciate your help in shaping a better future for our daughters.

Sincerely,*

Maida Rodríguez
Adorgraf

Claudia González Muñoz
Artprint

Laura Amelia González Triana
Artprint

Laura González Muñoz
Artprint

Niuris Higueras
Atelier

Gisela Vilaboy
Bambú

Gabriela Ogando Madruga
BnB Altamira’s

Julia de la Rosa
BnB La Rosa de Ortega

Malinalli Cortes
BnB Malinalli

Patricia Godinez Alonso
La Caja de Luz

Dayana Fajardo
Lisandra Muñoz
Club Salseando Chévere

Celia Mendoza
Amanda Castenado
Concierge Habana

Ilse Garcia Menendez
Confecciones MERCIL

Caridad Limonta
Confecciones PROCLE

Sandra Aldama
D'brujas

Yamina Vicente
Decorazón

Amanda Miguel Reyes
D'Marie

Ileana Sanchez
D'Marie

Maricel Ponvert Iser
D'Marie

Irina García
Deus Expertos Contables

Johanna Estrella Ruiz
Deus Expertos Contables

Marta Deus
Deus Expertos Contables

Mandao Express
Negolution

Mevelyn Alonso
Deus Expertos Contables

Zaylhi Linares
D’Eventos

Diana Hernandez Herrera
DiDi, Velas y Regalos

Elena Sanchez
Donde Dorian

Yuneisi Fonseca
Donde Dorian

Elizabeta Castro
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Marcia Roque
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Tienda Colecciones Freixas

Amarilys Fernández
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Laura Brito
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Gilda Flores
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Mabel Poblet Pujol
Mabel Poblet, Artista

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Nidialys Acosta
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Marlene Sánchez
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PAPELART

Clara Camalleri
Perfumes Clara

Patricia Santa Coloma
Producciones Almendares

Wendy Betancourt
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Reyna Hernández - La Reyna
La Reyna y La Real

Yadira Pintado - La Real
La Reyna y La Real

Marianela Pérez
Restaurante Pizzanella

Yordanka Fleitas
Restaurante Salsa Suarez

Sandra Borges
S Borges, Joyería Cubana

Lieng-Sut Joo Lledo
SUTPRINT

Ailette Hernandez
Tin Marin

Gretel de la Rosa
Tin Marin

Yanelis Pavón
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