

Our motto should be MACA, not MAGA.

Our economic competitiveness underlies our quality of life.

July 2025

Ms. Barbara Lee

Mayor of Oakland, California

Dear Mayor Lee,

Congratulations on your election as Mayor of Oakland. We are optimistic you can help Oakland to overcome problems it currently faces such as major revenue shortfalls and a paucity of retail. Recent surveys show that Oakland, California has very little retail for a city of its size. I, like my mother, am an Oakland native, and I remember growing up in Oakland in the 1950s when my mother would take us shopping in the then vibrant downtown Oakland which had an abundance of quality retail: large, medium, and small.

Our economic competitiveness underlies our quality of life.

(From my 2019 essay)

Economic Competitiveness: A Requirement to Maintain and Enhance our Standard of Living. MACA: Make American Competitive Again.

(Dec 2019)

<https://jackmanstatistics.com/commentary.html>

“Economic competitiveness underlies our prosperity. (p. 5)

- It enables us to accrue the wealth that supports a satisfactory and improving standard of living and quality of life.
- It enables us to accrue the wealth that supports quality infrastructure which encompasses good roads [free of potholes], good public services, good parks, and a quality educational system.

- It enables us to accrue the wealth that supports good housing.
- It enables us to accrue the wealth that supports quality medical care, including the proposed Medicare for All.
- It enables us to accrue the wealth that supports free college tuition and the proposed cancellation of all U.S. student loan debt.”

“How Are We Doing in Economic Competitiveness? (p. 6)

In the decades following World War II, the U.S. was unequivocally the richest country in the world and were pretty much number one in everything. In that era, we ran trade surpluses, i.e., we sold more than we bought in international trade. However, "our trade went into deficit in 1971. We have not run a surplus since 1975." (Fletcher, 2011, p. 143) "Chronic U.S. trade deficits of \$600 billion to \$800 billion annually over many years have turned America from the world's leading creditor nation to its largest debtor." (Prestowitz, 2010, p. 7)”

MACA: Make American Competitive Again

“Donald Trump's concerns about U.S. trade deficits (p. 2)

Donald Trump's concerns about U.S. trade deficits are long-standing, but he publicly voiced them most notably during his 2016 presidential campaign. He frequently criticized trade deals like NAFTA and argued that the U.S. was losing out on manufacturing jobs due to unfair trade practices, particularly with countries like China. He specifically mentioned wanting to impose tariffs on companies moving operations to Mexico.

“MAGA should have been called MACA: Make American Competitive Again.

Trump’s overriding goal was to restore American competitiveness in

manufacturing, not to build an American empire. So, the movement should have been called Make American Competitive Again (MACA). But it was inappropriately called Make America Great Again (MAGA). The MAGA movement has come to include ideologies such as right-wing populism, right-wing anti-globalism, national conservatism, neo-nationalism, and features significant illiberal, authoritarian and at times autocratic beliefs. We need to focus on restoring America's economic competitiveness which underlies our standard of living (to be discussed below).

Our motto should be MACA, not MAGA. “

I am planning a follow-up essay on economic competitiveness which will build on my essays on this subject of 2009, 2011, 2019, and 2021. Its tentative title will be “Tariffs, a Necessary but Insufficient First Step.” I hope to complete it by the end of Summer 2025.

Sincerely,

William E. Jackman, PhD

Statistician/SAS & SQL Programmer

Jazz and Popular Pianist

Oakland, California

July 2025

I am a second-generation Irish-American who grew up with immigrant Irish grandparents and aunts in Oakland. I am a graduate of Oakland High School and of the College of Engineering at UC Berkeley. I am fluent in Spanish. I am an active jazz and pop pianist and played the piano in a piano-bass-drums jazz trio with drummer Johnny Apperson and bassist Terry Hilliard for over two decades (photo). Johnny served for 13 years as a Special Assistant to Congressman Ron Dellums in Washington, D.C. and shared an office with you.



References

Three Billion News Capitalists (2005) by Clyde Prestowitz

The Betrayal of American Prosperity (2010) by Clyde Prestowitz

Free Trade Doesn't Work (2011) by Ian Fletcher

Death By China (2011) by Peter Navarro and Greg Autry

In Praise of Hard Industries (1999) by Eamonn Fingleton.