



Panama Talking Points

October 2007

- “The United States-Panama Trade Promotion Agreement...will generate export opportunities for U.S. farmers, ranchers, and companies, help create jobs in the United States, and help American consumers save money while offering them more choices. The Agreement will also benefit the people of Panama by providing economic opportunity and by strengthening democracy.” *President George W. Bush, 30 March 2007*
- The United States and Panama concluded free trade negotiations of the U.S.-Panama Trade Promotion Agreement (U.S.-Panama TPA) on December 19, 2006 and signed the Agreement on June 28, 2007. Both countries need to also pass implementing legislation before the U.S.-Panama TPA can enter into force.
- This comprehensive trade agreement will eliminate tariffs and other barriers to trade of goods and services, promote economic growth, and enhance trade between the United States and Panama.
- The agreement will provide expanded access to Panama’s entire services market, including financial services. The \$5.25 billion expansion plan for the Panama Canal offers many new economic opportunities for U.S. providers of goods and services.
- Some of the leading sectors are Telecommunications Equipment, Construction Equipment and Supplies, Travel and Tourism, Material Handling Equipment, Environmental Equipment and Services, Medical Equipment and Supplies and many more.
- Panama is a strong trading partner and has the potential to be an even greater place to do business. Business practices in Panama are very similar to those in the United States. Business tends to be direct and straightforward.
- The expansion of the Panama Canal, an infrastructure project of historic proportions, is quickly taking form. The pre-qualification of the bidders for the construction of the new locks is anticipated by the end of 2007, with the final selection by the Autoridad del Canal de Panamá (ACP, the Panama Canal Authority) expected by mid-2008. These projects are of great interest to major U.S. construction and engineering firms, as well as exporters of a variety of goods and services.