

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515

November 10, 2003

The Honorable Robert B. Zoellick  
U.S. Trade Representative  
600 17<sup>th</sup> Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20508

Dear Ambassador Zoellick:

We are writing to you concerning product and sector coverage in the U.S.-Central America Free Trade Agreement (FTA) negotiations.

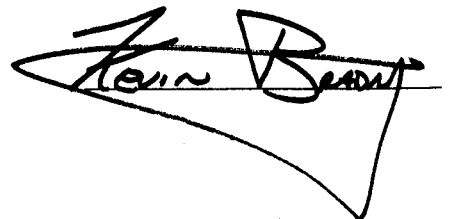
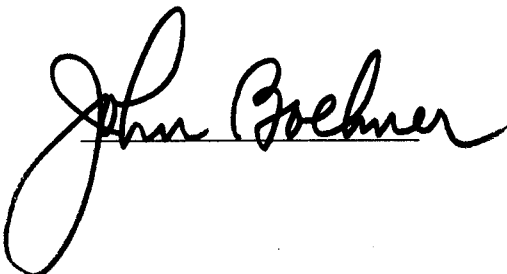
We are deeply concerned by reports that the Central American countries participating in these negotiations have identified specific products or sectors where they seek exemptions from fully free trade under the FTA. Accepting exemptions or exclusion would weaken these agreements and therefore we applaud the strong stance that you and your negotiators have taken to date in opposing exceptions to the agreement.

The United States is currently engaged in numerous bilateral and regional negotiations. Allowing exemptions under the U.S.-Central America FTA would send a damaging message to future trading partners that they too can expect to receive exemptions from the principle of fully free trade for sensitive areas in FTA negotiations with the United States. Such a result would be particularly troubling because it is in the most sensitive areas, such as agricultural, industrial goods and services trade, where the United States has the most to gain from FTA negotiations.

As we understand it, the next few months will be critical for the timely conclusion of the U.S.-Central American Free Trade Agreement. We urge you to continue to press for duty free, quota free treatment for all products and meaningful commitments in all sectors during the final negotiating sessions. Sheltering critical sectors from the agreement would set a dangerous precedent that would seriously undermine our ability to produce commercially meaningful agreements in the future.

We appreciate your attention to this very important matter and look forward to working with you and your negotiating team.

Sincerely,



David Scott

Jimmy Bellamy

Jim DeWint

Michael Chayen

Sam

Chen Kim

John Klein

Jeff Webb

Judy Bizzyert

Champ Shays

Anne M. Northrup

Gregg  
McCart

David Dreier

John Boyman

Jennifer Dunn

Bob Alford

Rahm Emanuel

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John Hostetler

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Phil Crane

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