



Letters of Support For Pending Free Trade Agreements

www.tradeagreements.gov

2008

Prepared by the Office of Public and Media Affairs
United States Trade Representative
(202) 395-3230

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Letters from Mayors, Governors, and State Legislators

- ✚ Letter in Support of the U.S. – Colombia Free Trade Agreement from 20 Mayors
- ✚ Governor Sonny Perdue (Georgia)
- ✚ Mayor Stephen R. Reed (Harrisburg, PA)
- ✚ Mayor C. Ray Nagin (New Orleans, LA)
- ✚ Governor Charlie Crist (Florida)
- ✚ Governor Timothy M. Kaine (Virginia)
- ✚ State Representative Felipe Reinoso (Connecticut)
- ✚ Mayor Boyd W. Dunn (Chandler, AZ)
- ✚ Mayor Tom Leppert (Dallas, TX), Mayor Mike Moncrief (Ft. Worth, TX), and Mayor Robert Cluck (Arlington, TX)
- ✚ State Senator Don Balfour (Georgia)
- ✚ Mayor Mick Cornett (Oklahoma City, OK)
- ✚ Mayor Manuel A. Diaz (Miami, FL)
- ✚ State Representative Joseph E. Miro (Delaware)
- ✚ Mayor Jerry Sanders (San Diego, CA)
- ✚ Mayor Brad Cole (Carbondale, IL)
- ✚ Mayor Curt Pringle (Anaheim, CA)
- ✚ Mayor Richard M. Daley (Chicago, IL)
- ✚ Mayor Antonio R. Villaraigosa (Los Angeles, CA)

Letters from Congressional members and Administrative Officials

- ✚ Open Letter to Congress from Former Senior Officials in Democratic Administrations and Democratic Members of Congress Supporting the U.S. – Colombia Free Trade Agreement
- ✚ Congressional Letter in Support of the U.S. - Colombia Free Trade Agreement by the Republican members of the House Committee on Ways & Means
- ✚ Open Letter to Congress from Former Secretaries of Commerce in Support of the Pending Free Trade Agreements
- ✚ Congressional Letter in Support of the U.S. - Korea Free Trade Agreement by Ten Democrats
- ✚ Open Letter to Congressional Democrats on Hemispheric Trade Expansion
- ✚ Open Letter to Congress from Former Commanders of the U.S. Southern Command Supporting the U.S.-Colombia Trade Promotion Agreement

Letters from Foreign Leaders (Non-Officials Translations are included)

- ✚ Central American Ambassadors (Ambassador of Costa Rica, F. Tomas Duenas; Ambassador of the Dominican Republic, Favio Dario Espinal; Ambassador of El Salvador, Rene A. Leon; Ambassador of Guatemala, Francisco Villangran; Ambassador of Honduras, Roberto Flores Bermudez)

- ✚ President of the Republic of Peru, Alan Garcia Perez
- ✚ Speaker of the Colombian House of Representatives, Oscar Arboleda Palacio
- ✚ European Commissioner for External Trade, Peter Mandelson
- ✚ President of the United Mexican States, Felipe Calderón Hinojosa
- ✚ President of the Republic of Costa Rica, Oscar Arias Sánchez
- ✚ Central American leaders (President of El Salvador, Elias Antonio Saca; President of Honduras, Manuel Zelaya; President of Nicaragua, Daniel Ortega Saavedra; and President of Guatemala, Oscar Berger)
- ✚ President of the Republic of Chile, Michelle Bachelet Jeria

**MAYORS IN SUPPORT OF THE U.S. COLOMBIA TRADE
PROMOTION AGREEMENT**

April 11, 2008

**The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
The Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
The U.S. Capitol
Washington, D.C.**

Dear Speaker Pelosi,

We are very appreciative of your leadership and commitment to improving our Nation's competitive position in the world economy. As mayors, we are directly engaged in building our local economies and expanding our jobs base. The more that our businesses, both small and large, and our local entrepreneurs can engage in international trade, the better, as we see such trade as key to further economic growth.

It is because of this that we write, as Democrats and Republicans, to express strong bi-partisan support for the pending U.S. Colombia Trade Promotion Agreement. We do so for several major reasons:

- (1) Presently, Colombian goods enter the U.S. market essentially without tariffs while U.S. goods, entering Colombia, are subject to tariffs, creating an uneven trade relationship and a barrier to equitable treatment of U.S. exports. This Agreement eliminates the tariffs on U.S. goods and thus a fair and balanced trade relationship would result. This will help U.S. agricultural, manufacturing and other sectors.**
- (2) Nearly 40% of U.S. economic growth has been associated with this Nation's export activities. Of the 14 countries with Free Trade Agreements with the U.S., Colombia already receives a very measurable percentage of the U.S. exports under these Agreements and there is therefore every reason to believe the trade of U.S. goods to Colombia will increase because they will be cheaper in the Colombian market under this Agreement. That means more jobs in the U.S.**

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
April 11, 2008

Page Two

- (3) This Agreement further stabilizes a country now showing great progress from when its economy was once based on narco-trade and punctuated by serious violence. A more stable Colombia is in this Nation's interests. Moreover, we think it is strategically important for the U.S. to further build stronger relationships with key countries in South America to counter-balance and isolate the anti-American efforts of Venezuela's leadership.
- (4) If we walk away from this and similar Agreements, we are ceding the Western Hemisphere to our competitors who unhesitantly would pursue and are seeking greater market share in the countries both close to the U.S. and elsewhere. That is not in our interests. It is of concern to us that there are presently as many as one hundred other Trade Agreements being negotiated worldwide that do not include the U.S. We need to maintain a very competitive advantage, especially in our own hemisphere.

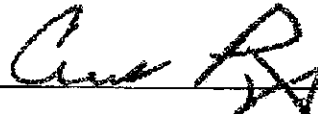
We are grateful for your consideration of these views and hope you will schedule the U.S. Colombia Trade Agreement for House action and that it will be fully approved.

With warmest regards, we are

Yours Sincerely



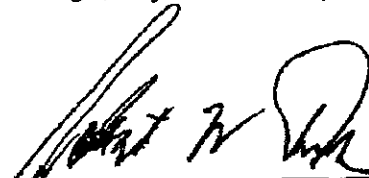
Stephen R. Reed, Mayor of Harrisburg, Pennsylvania



Curt Pringle, Mayor of Anaheim, California



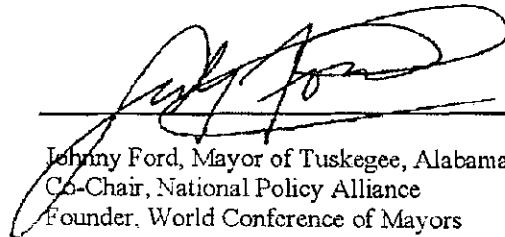
Tom Leppert, Mayor of Dallas, Texas



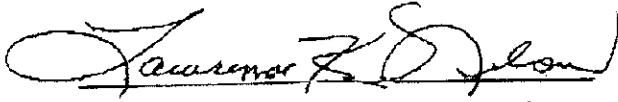
Robert N. Cluck, M.D., Mayor of Arlington, Texas



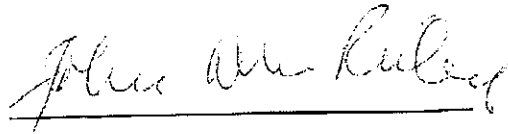
Heidi Davidson, Mayor of Athens-Clarke County, Georgia



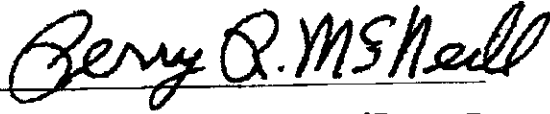
Johnny Ford, Mayor of Tuskegee, Alabama
Co-Chair, National Policy Alliance
Founder, World Conference of Mayors



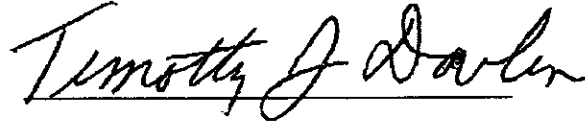
Lawrence K. Nelson, Mayor of Yuma, Arizona



John D. W. Recley, Mayor of Pottsville, Pennsylvania



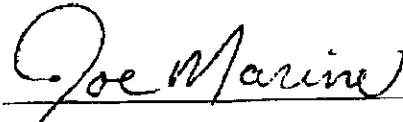
Dr. Perry R. McNeill, P.E., Mayor of Denton, Texas



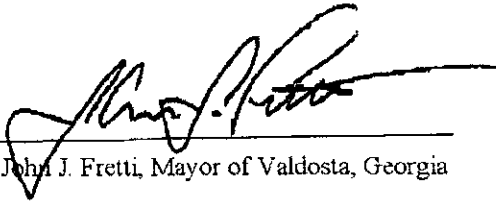
Timothy J. Davlin, Mayor of Springfield, Illinois



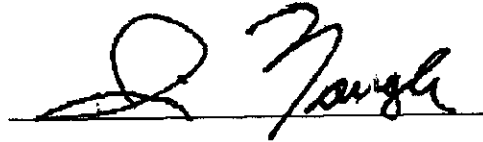
Robert J. Austin, Mayor Estacada, Oregon



Joe Marine, Mayor of Mukilteo, Washington



John J. Fretti, Mayor of Valdosta, Georgia



Jim Naugle, Mayor of Fort Lauderdale, Florida



Boyd W. Dunn, Mayor of Chandler, Arizona



Kirk R. Wilson, Mayor of Carlisle, Pennsylvania



Lou Ogden, Mayor of Tualatin, Oregon



STATE OF GEORGIA

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

ATLANTA 30334-0900

Sonny Perdue
GOVERNOR

March 25, 2008

The Honorable Carlos Gutierrez
Secretary
U.S. Department of Commerce
Washington, DC 20230

Dear Secretary Gutierrez,

On behalf of the State of Georgia, I offer my support for the free trade agreements with Colombia, Panama and the Republic of South Korea. I believe these negotiations will act as an effective means of promoting trade opportunities both in Georgia and abroad.

Georgia is home to 55 Consulates (Career and Honorary), 15 trade offices and 23 Bi-National Chambers; therefore, I believe great opportunity lies ahead for our state and others by promoting these free trade agreements. As you may know, Georgia already trades with Colombia, Panama and the Republic of South Korea. In fact, Georgia currently conducts approximately \$4 billion a year in business with South Korea alone. These figures would surely increase were such trade covenants approved. As such, I encourage you to continue to work with Congress on favorable passage of these important trade alliances.

Thank you for your continued advocacy on behalf of this important issue. I will continue to work with Georgia's Congressional delegation in support of these agreements.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sonny Perdue".

Sonny Perdue
Governor



**Office of the Mayor
The City of Harrisburg**

M.L.K. City Government Center
10 North Second Street
Harrisburg, PA 17101-1678

Stephen R. Reed
Mayor

January 7, 2008

(717) 255-3 040

Honorable Robert P. Casey, Jr.
Member, United States Senate
Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Casey:

The United States Congress will very soon be taking up the matter of the United States-Columbia Trade Promotion Agreement. We take this opportunity to express our endorsement and support of the same.

Of the four different Trade Agreements currently going through the approval process, with the Agreement with Peru having been approved by Congress in December, this would be the largest of these three Trade Agreements. The United States has a sixteen billion dollar trade relationship with Columbia.

Most of the goods being imported into the United States from Columbia come to this nation without any tariffs being imposed. This is not the case, however, with regard to most goods being exported by the United States to Columbia.

One of the principle effects of the proposed new Trade Agreement with Columbia would be to remove these tariffs on U.S. goods, along with the removal of certain trade barriers affecting U.S. generated products.

The primary beneficiaries of the proposed Free Trade Agreement with Columbia would be the agricultural, manufacturing and service industries of our nation. All three have a major presence in Pennsylvania, of course.

It is particularly useful for stronger economic relationships to evolve with Columbia, not only because it will benefit the United States economy but because it will further allow the evolution of Columbia's economy away from what was once an economy dominated by illegal

Honorable Robert P. Casey, Jr.

Page 2

January 7, 2008

narcotics. Moreover, given the extent of our competition with other major trading countries in the world, it is certain that should the United States not act to improve its own free trade relationship with Columbia, there are certainly other competitors who will want to take advantage of such for their own gain and at our loss.

With the further advances in the economic productivity and strength of the Asian Pacific Rim countries, it is also important to have the United States lead the further advancement and growth of the economy in the Western Hemisphere. In doing so, we advance the United States not only in economic terms but in other ways, as well. Candidly, having other countries on other continents gaining greater economic footholds in the Western Hemisphere is not in our nation's best interests.

For these and related reasons, we think that the United States-Columbia Trade Promotion Agreement should be adopted and appreciate your consideration of this view.

With warmest personal regards, I am

Yours sincerely,



Stephen R. Reed
Mayor

SRR/kdk

CITY OF NEW ORLEANS
C. RAY NAGIN, MAYOR



November 8, 2007

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House
United States House of Representatives
235 Canon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Madam Speaker:

As Mayor and on behalf of the City of New Orleans, I wish to thank you for your support of the free trade agreement (FTA) with Peru, and congratulate you on its passage. I also respectfully urge you to continue to support free trade by promoting future agreements with Colombia, Panama and South Korea. Each of the future FTAs would provide unique opportunities for the City of New Orleans to increase international economic development.

Three of these countries were top ten locations for exports from Louisiana in 2006, totaling \$1.4 billion. Lowered or eliminated importation barriers to our petroleum and coal products and chemical manufactures, which account, on average, for 46% of our exports to these states will greatly benefit our economy and the nation as our exports also include goods manufactured around the country.

Corn and soybeans are the number one and two exports from Louisiana's ports, with Colombia and South Korea in the top five recipients of these products. The pending FTAs in Congress will eliminate 77% of agricultural tariffs immediately in Colombia and 66% in South Korea, greatly increasing trade in this area. We also export \$212 million in oil to Panama. Again, the FTA will initially significantly eliminate a variety of tariffs, with the effect of greatly increasing exports in oil and other petroleum products to Panama and other countries.

New Orleans is becoming an even greater international city in the wake of Hurricane Katrina and we are making every effort to capitalize on the trade liberalization that will flow from these FTAs. Our port system is ideally situated to take advantage of the Latin American FTAs and we plan to seek out bilateral investment opportunities with our FTA partners. As the largest tonnage port in the United States, we specialize in the transport of bulk materials such as grain, crude oil, and petrochemicals, all of which are subject to tariff elimination by these FTAs. The South Louisiana Ports account for 50% of grain exports for the entire country, making agreements which lower tariffs on agricultural products crucial to the nation's economy as well as New Orleans and Louisiana's local economies.

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi

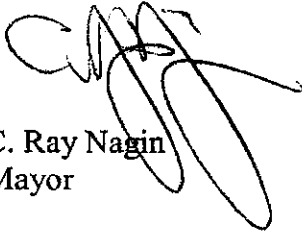
November 8, 2007

Page 2

We are already hard at work securing the economic advantages available under the Dominican Republic-Central American Free Trade Agreement and look forward to continuing our efforts with new FTA partners.

Thank you in advance for your consideration on this issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. Nagin', with a large, stylized flourish extending from the end of the signature.

C. Ray Nagin
Mayor

cc: The Honorable Rodney Alexander
The Honorable Richard Baker
The Honorable Charles Boustany
The Honorable William Jefferson
The Honorable Bobby Jindal
The Honorable Jim McCrery
The Honorable Charles Melancon



CHARLIE CRIST
GOVERNOR

October 5, 2007

The Honorable Carlos Gutierrez
Secretary
U.S. Department of Commerce
Washington, DC 20230

Dear Secretary Gutierrez:

On behalf of the State of Florida, I offer my strong support of the trade promotion agreements with Peru, Panama, Colombia, and South Korea. Your exhaustive efforts advocating these agreements have been instrumental in building a strong coalition of support for the U.S.'s free trade agenda.

As the "Gateway of the Americas", Florida supports eliminating barriers to global commerce, while promoting beneficial trade policies not only in our hemisphere, but worldwide. Florida already has a substantial trade relationship with Peru, Panama, and Colombia, with combined two-way trade valued at over \$7 billion in 2006. Trade between Florida and these countries will undoubtedly grow after these agreements have been implemented and will strengthen our economic and cultural ties. Florida's business community, ninety-seven percent of which are small and medium sized enterprises, relies on trade promoting legislation to enter the global market place. Most importantly, these agreements help level the playing field and create a beneficial, reciprocal relationship with our partners in our hemisphere and beyond.

Given our shared goals of promoting global trade, I have instructed my office to coordinate with the U.S. Department of Commerce and U.S. Trade Representative in supporting the passage of these agreements. I intend to work with Florida's congressional delegation and our international partners in Florida to see that these agreements become a reality.

Once again, thank you for your hard work and I look forward to working together to accomplish these agreements.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Charlie Crist".

Charlie Crist

CC/kf



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Office of the Governor

Timothy M. Kaine
Governor

September 26, 2007

The Honorable Carlos M. Gutierrez
Secretary of Commerce
Mailstop 61
United States Department of Commerce
14th and Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20230

Dear Secretary Gutierrez:

Thank you for your letter regarding legislation to implement Free Trade Agreements with Peru, Panama, Columbia, and South Korea. Global commerce is vital to the economy of Virginia, and we stand in support of those means which further advance the economic prosperity of our Commonwealth.

Exports in 2006 from Virginia to Peru, Panama, and Columbia totaled over \$141 million, and South Korean exports were over \$214 million. Export figures are on track to exceed those amounts in 2007. Having responsible Free Trade Agreements in place will facilitate the ease with which Virginia companies are able to trade with these countries.

As Congress begins consideration of these agreements in the interest of advancing global trade, my Administration will participate in the discussion so that forthcoming Free Trade Agreements may continue to enhance Virginia's economy.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tim", written over a horizontal line.

Timothy M. Kaine

TMK:dh



State of Connecticut
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
STATE CAPITOL
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106-1591

REPRESENTATIVE FELIPE REINOSO
ONE HUNDRED THIRTIETH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING
ROOM 4114
HARTFORD, CT 06106-1591
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DEPUTY MAJORITY LEADER

MEMBER
EDUCATION COMMITTEE
FINANCE, REVENUE AND BONDING COMMITTEE
LABOR AND PUBLIC EMPLOYEES COMMITTEE
LEGISLATIVE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

September 19, 2007

Congressman Christopher Shays
1126 Longworth Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Shays:

I am writing this letter in support of the U.S.-Peru Trade Promotion Agreement (TPA), pending consideration by the House Ways and Means Committee, which Congressman Charles Rangel, Chairman of the committee, recently visited Peru to discuss.

Free Trade agreements have proven to be very successful for U.S. manufacturers, workers and farmers. The U.S.-Peru TPA will assist United States companies through tariff free access into Peru once this measure takes effect. It will provide new market access for our consumer and industrial products, while improving the business climate in Peru, as they enact the necessary domestic legal and business reforms required to implement the agreement.

It is for these reasons, and more that I encourage you to pass the implementing legislation for the U.S.-Peru TPA.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of this important free trade agreement.

Sincerely,

Representative Felipe Reinoso
Deputy Majority Leader
130th District

SERVING BRIDGEPORT



Chandler - Arizona
Where Values Make The Difference

September 17, 2007

Boyd W. Dunn
Mayor

Office of the Mayor

Telephone
(480) 782-2200

Fax
(480) 782-2233

E-mail
boyd.dunn@chandleraz.gov

Mailing Address
Mail Stop 603
PO Box 4008
Chandler, Arizona 85244-4008

Location
Suite 501
55 North Arizona Place
Chandler, Arizona 85225

Ms. Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House
H-232, U.S. Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi:

As the Mayor of the City of Chandler, I am writing to request your support of the free trade agreements with Peru, Colombia, Panama, and Korea.

Chandler's economy, like many other cities, is becoming increasingly global. Many of the high-tech companies that have located here also have operations in other parts of the world. The continuing effort to remove trade barriers with these countries will open up new markets for some of our key corporate citizens. Their success in the global marketplace will certainly help assure the future sustainability of our community.

Although Chandler is no longer an agricultural community, farming continues to be a major sector of the State's economy. The Peru, Colombia, and Panama Free Trade Agreements will help bring new opportunities to Arizona's farmers and ranchers.

These trade agreements have the potential of creating significant economic benefits for Arizona and the rest of the United States. In addition, these agreements give us another means of strengthening freedom and democracy in other parts of the world, and in enhancing our security through improved geopolitical relationships.

I appreciate your consideration in the support of these measures.

Sincerely,

Boyd W. Dunn
Mayor



September 14, 2007

The Honorable Max Baucus
511 Senate Hart Office Building
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Baucus:

As Mayors of the three largest cities in the North Texas metro area, we are jointly urging your support of the free trade agreements (FTA) with Columbia, Peru, Panama and Korea.

The North Texas economic engine is one of the strongest in the country. It is a \$300 Billion economy with the 5th largest gross product in the United States. We led the nation in job creation in the past few years, annually netting approximately 90,000 new jobs. Four of the country's top ten growth economies are here in Texas, and North Texas is the highest in total growth. And that growth is expected to continue through the end of this decade.

Our region is home to many multi-national firms and has become a major trade hub for the country. Removing barriers to commercial trade between our nation and other free economies will open vital new markets for companies here and boost the flow of goods and services through North Texas.

Free trade agreements provide new and significant economic opportunities with our foreign trade partners, which in turn strengthens our position in the world economy. It also encourages responsible labor, social and environmental policies with those partners as well.

We again urge passage of these free trade agreements. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Tom Leppert.

Tom Leppert
Mayor of Dallas

Handwritten signature of Mike Moncrief.

Mike Moncrief
Mayor of Ft. Worth

Handwritten signature of Robert Cluck.

Robert Cluck
Mayor of Arlington

SENATOR DON BALFOUR

District 3
453 State Capitol
Atlanta, Georgia 30334
(404) 656-0095
Fax (404) 666-8581
Email: ss9balfour@aol.com



The State Senate
Atlanta, Georgia 30334

COMMITTEES:

Chairman, Rules Committee
Approvals
Education and Youth
Health and Human Services

September 11, 2007

The Honorable Saxby Chambliss
416 Russell SOB
Washington, DC 20510-1005

Dear Senator Chambliss,

I am writing in support of the free trade agreements with Peru, Columbia, Panama and Korea.

Georgia depends on world markets and these agreements will help to open vital new markets and remove barriers to goods and services exports between Georgia and these countries. Manufacturing, mining, construction and agricultural products are a few of the exports that now go to world wide countries. The free trade agreements that are before Congress will help to create an economic boom for businesses and provide jobs and a better quality of life for all Georgians.

I urge you to support the free trade agreements with Peru, Columbia, Panama and Korea.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Don Balfour".

Don Balfour
State Senator



The City of
OKLAHOMA CITY
MAYOR MICK CORNETT

September 11, 2007

The Honorable James Inhofe
U.S. Senate
453 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510-3603

Dear Senator Inhofe:

As proof of my consistent support for creating more jobs in Oklahoma City, I am writing in support of the Free Trade Agreements with Korea, Peru, Colombia, and Panama. As the Mayor of Oklahoma's capital city, I appreciate the value of opening up vital new markets and advancing local opportunities for international commerce. These Free Trade Agreements will mean more economic activity and more jobs for Oklahoma.

As an example, in 2006, Oklahoma exported \$13.5 million in goods to Peru and \$36 million in goods to Colombia. These numbers will only grow once the Free Trade Agreements are in force.

Oklahoma City has truly become a world-class city, and Oklahoma is doing business internationally like never before. Given the potential for new and substantial economic opportunities, bilateral Free Trade Agreements with our foreign partners are the next logical step to strengthening our local economies. For these reasons, I urge you to support the Free Trade Agreements with Korea, Peru, Colombia and Panama.

Thank you for your consideration of this issue, and thank you for all you are doing for Oklahoma.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mick Cornett".

Mick Cornett
Mayor

City of Miami, Florida

MANUEL A. DIAZ
MAYOR



3500 PAN AMERICAN DRIVE
MIAMI, FLORIDA 33133
(305) 250-5300
FAX (305) 854-4001

September 11, 2007

The Honorable Gus Bilirakis
U.S. House of Representatives
1630 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Bilirakis:

I am writing urging your support of the free trade agreements (FTA) with Peru, Colombia, and Panama.

Supporting these agreements will remove barriers to goods and services exchanged between our countries, and will allow for the better movement of technology, innovation, and resources. It is of further benefit in that it allows citizens of the countries to more easily purchase American goods, while at the same time allowing our citizens to benefit from the goods and resources of these countries.

Our city has become the natural business capital for Latin America through its over 60% foreign born population and over 150 languages spoken daily. It is through free trade and openness to foreign markets that we have expanded our economy, created new jobs, and provided the opportunity for advancement to our residents. Ratification of these FTAs will provide a market of over 75 million consumers and \$575 billion, allowing us to expand our nearly \$13 billion commercial investment in this area, a clear benefit to this city and our state as well.

I once again urge you to support passage of these FTAs and I thank you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Manuel A. Diaz'. The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the word 'Sincerely,'.

September 7, 2007

The Honorable Nancy P. Pelosi
Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives
235 Cannon HOB
Washington D.C., 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi,

I am writing this letter in support of the U.S.-Panama Trade Promotion Agreement (TPA). The United States and Panama signed the U.S.-Panama TPA on December 19, 2006. Both countries need to pass implementing legislation before the U.S.-Panama TPA can enter into force.

Free trade agreements have proven to be very successful for U.S. manufacturers, workers and farmers. Panama's predominately service-based economy is a growing market for U.S. products and services, and the \$5.25 billion expansion plan for the Panama Canal offers many new economic opportunities for U.S. providers of goods and services.

The U.S.-Panama TPA will level the playing field for U.S. companies who will enjoy tariff free access into Panama once the agreement takes full effect. It will provide new market access for our consumer and industrial products while improving the business climate in Panama as the country enacts the necessary domestic legal and business reforms required to implement the agreement.

It is for these reasons and more that I encourage you to pass the implementing legislation for the U.S.-Panama TPA. Thank you for your consideration of this important free trade agreement.

Sincerely,

Joseph E. Miro
State Representative
22nd District

JEM/jd
1271440041



JERRY SANDERS
MAYOR

September 5, 2007

The Honorable Max Baucus
Chairman
Senate Committee on Finance
219 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510-6200

Dear Chairman Baucus:

I write in support of the free trade agreements with Panama, Columbia, Peru and South Korea as currently proposed by the United States Trade Representative.

The proposed agreements provide significant benefits to the U.S. economy, including major industry and consumers located here in San Diego. These agreements provide improved access to large and growing markets in both Latin America and in South Korea by removing tariffs on U.S. exports and creating a "level playing field" including enforceable protections for U.S. investors and powerful and expedited dispute settlement mechanisms.

Additionally, San Diego is home to an active and growing maritime port which hosts one of the few on-dock cold storage facilities on the U.S. west coast and is the first port of entry on the west coast for reefer ships arriving from Latin America. This, combined with the chance for increased importing and exporting opportunities with South Korea, will benefit the San Diego region and its citizens should the trade agreements be adopted.

It is for these reasons that I urge your support of the proposed FTA with Panama, Columbia, Peru and South Korea.

Sincerely,


JERRY SANDERS

JS/be

cc: Bill Beherns, Special Assistant to the President Office of Intergovernmental Affairs



Brad Cole, Mayor

200 South Illinois Avenue
Post Office Box 2047
Carbondale, Illinois 62902-2047
Telephone 618-457-3229
Fax 618-351-5766
bcole@ci.carbondale.il.us

August 29, 2007

The Honorable Richard J. Durbin
United States Senate
309 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510-1304
Fax: 202-228-0400

Dear Senator Durbin:

I write to urge your support for the free trade agreements that involve Peru, Colombia, Panama and South Korea.

While there is often much discussion about the benefits of free trade, and perhaps specifically with these nations, it is obvious that free trade agreements allow for technology, various goods and agricultural products, ideas and other resources to be bought, sold or otherwise exchanged in a manner that is positive toward the United States.

These agreements deserve your support, to help open markets and advance open relationships around the world. Your consideration is appreciated.

Yours very truly,

MAYOR BRAD COLE

The Capital of Southern Illinois



CITY OF ANAHEIM
MAYOR CURT PRINGLE

August 24, 2007

The Honorable Max Baucus
Chairman
Senate Committee on Finance
219 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510-6200

Dear Chairman Baucus:

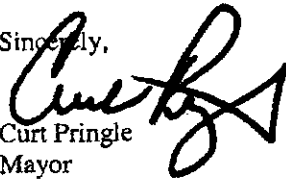
I am writing in support of the free trade agreements (FTA) with Peru, Colombia, Panama and Korea. As the Mayor of Anaheim, California's tenth largest city, I fully appreciate the value these agreements will have in opening vital new markets and advancing local opportunities for international commerce.

For the past half century, increased market access achieved through trade agreements has played a major role in our nation's success as the world's leading exporter. Similar agreements with Peru, Columbia, Panama and Korea will continue this trend by removing barriers to goods and services exports, establishing secure and predictable legal frameworks and providing protections for investment and intellectual property.

As one of the premier California resort destinations, the City of Anaheim is known worldwide as a center for entertainment, tourism and convention activities. Additionally, Anaheim is also recognized as a world-class business center and the regional hub for economic activity in Orange County. Maintaining and expanding commercial ties with emerging economies in both South America and Asia will undoubtedly compliment our commitment to increasing business growth and international commerce within our city and the Orange County region.

Given the potential for new and substantial economic opportunities, bilateral trade agreements with our foreign partners is the next logical step to strengthening our national and local economies. For these reasons, I urge you to support the free trade agreements with Peru, Colombia, Panama and Korea.

Sincerely,


Curt Pringle
Mayor

200 South Anaheim Boulevard, Anaheim, California 92805
(714) 765-5247 • FAX (714) 765-5164 • www.anaheim.net



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

CITY OF CHICAGO

July 26, 2007

RICHARD M. DALEY
MAYOR

The Honorable Max Baucus
Chairman
Senate Committee on Finance
219 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510-6200

Dear Chairman Baucus:

As Mayor and on behalf of the City of Chicago, I urge you to support the free trade agreements (FTA) with Peru, Colombia, Panama and Korea.

Supporting these agreements will remove barriers to goods and services exchanged between our countries and allow for the better movement of technology, innovation and resources. These trade agreements make it easier for Peru, Colombia, Panama and Korea to purchase American goods, and it will help America benefit from the resources in each of those countries.

Chicago is a global city with a population of residents from Peru, Korea, Colombia and Panama that exceeds 50,000. Many of them came to our city for a better life, and the opportunity to succeed in a fair and open market should be reflected in the policies we have with these countries. Working with countries around the world in the context of free trade fosters good relationships, supports labor rights and promotes environmentally responsible policies.

Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Richard M. Daley". The signature is stylized and written in a cursive-like font.

Mayor



ANTONIO R. VILLARAIGOSA
MAYOR

June 20, 2007

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House
United States House of Representatives
235 Canon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Madam Speaker:

I want to express my support for the recently completed U.S. – Korea Free Trade Agreement. As you know, this agreement was concluded on April 1 and has been transmitted to Congress for consideration.

The U.S. – Korea Free Trade Agreement (FTA) represents a valuable opportunity for the California economy. As Mayor of Los Angeles, I have long understood how interconnected we are to the world and the global economy. Perhaps no where is this better seen than through our relationship with South Korea. South Korea is the Los Angeles Custom District's third largest trading partner, with close to \$18 billion in two-way trade in 2005. In addition, Los Angeles and Southern California have the largest population of Koreans outside of Korea. Los Angeles has seen the importance of this economic relationship as there has been a surge of investment from South Korean businesses who want to diversify their investments in the U.S. and look to our region as a prime location for those investments. I saw this firsthand during my Asia trade mission in October, where I announced the attraction of approximately \$300 million in Foreign Direct Investment from Korea. Investments such as these will create new jobs and economic opportunities.

This agreement will also provide benefits to California industries including agriculture, high tech, and logistics. As America's largest agricultural exporting state, California agricultural producers will have greater access to South Korea's \$11 billion agriculture market. Under this FTA, almost two-thirds of U.S. agricultural exports, or a value of \$1.9 billion, will be immediately duty-free.

200 NORTH SPRING STREET • LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90012

PHONE: (213) 978-0600 • FAX: (213) 978-0750

EMAIL: MAYOR@LACITY.ORG

000000



The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
June 20, 2007
Page 2

California wine producers will benefit from this agreement as South Korea will immediately eliminate all tariffs on wine.

The high tech and digital arts industry will also benefit as it provides for duty-free treatment of digital products, such as software. It also decreases the Korean TV content quota for film and animation. Finally, it protects the creative work of our entertainment industry by offering high intellectual property protection for music, videos, and software.

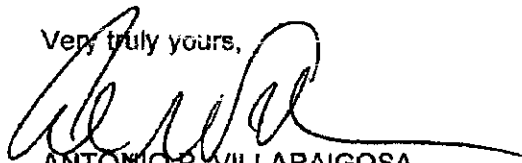
Finally, I want to point out that increased trade will create more jobs in the fast-growing logistics industry. As you know, the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach handle 43% of the cargo containers shipped to the U.S. This economic positioning has translated into approximately 500,000 jobs in Los Angeles County and is projected to triple within the next 20 years. As the window to the East, Los Angeles and California are uniquely positioned to be the logistics gateway for American goods from the Midwest, South, and East Coast.

In addition, I am encouraged by the recent agreement between the Democratic leadership and the White House that will guide future trade policy. Without a doubt, it is important to incorporate fundamental labor and environmental standards for all trade agreements. Not only is this good and sound policy, but this is also good business.

I often note that I see Los Angeles as the "Venice of the Twenty-First Century", the preeminent global capital bridging the Asian investors of the East with the emerging markets to the South. It is by developing this global synergy and embracing our interconnectedness that will ensure that Los Angeles and California continue to be competitive around the world.

Thank you for your consideration of this issue.

Very truly yours,



ANTONIO R. VILLARAIGOSA
Mayor

ARV:js/dg

cc: The Honorable Howard "Buck" McKeon, Congressman, 26th District, California
The Honorable Brad Sherman, Congressman, 27th District, California
The Honorable Howard Berman, Congressman, 28th District, California
The Honorable Xavier Becerra, Congressman, 31st District, California
The Honorable Adam Schiff, Congressman, 29th District, California

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
June 20, 2007
Page 3

The Honorable Henry Waxman, Congressman, 30th District, California
The Honorable Hilda Solis, Congresswoman, 32nd District, California
The Honorable Diane Watson, Congresswoman, 33rd District, California
The Honorable Lucille Roybal-Allard, Congresswoman, 34th District, California
The Honorable Maxine Waters, Congresswoman, 35th District, California
The Honorable Jane Harmon, Congresswoman, 36th District, California
The Honorable Linda Sanchez, Congresswoman, 39th District, California
The Honorable Dana Rohrabacher, Congressman, 46th District, California

Open Letter From Former Senior Officials In Democratic Administrations and Democratic Members Of Congress Supporting The United States-Colombia Free Trade Agreement

We, the undersigned, who have served in senior positions in the U.S. government, strongly urge Congress to take up and approve the U.S.-Colombia Free Trade Agreement this year. We believe this Agreement is in both our vital national security and economic interests. We feel that the treaty should be considered as soon as possible and that any obstacles be quickly and amicably resolved.

There is an overwhelming national security imperative to approving the Colombia FTA. There is a growing animus in some parts of the hemisphere toward the U.S., but Colombia has long been a traditional friend, and Colombian President Uribe has been a strong and faithful ally of the United States. To turn our back on the Colombia FTA would be a severe blow to that relationship and would send a very negative message to our friends in a volatile region. It is no coincidence that the leaders of Mexico, Chile, Canada, Guatemala, Costa Rica, and Peru among others, have strongly supported this treaty in the name of hemispheric solidarity. Failure to act would strengthen those in the region who would argue that we leave our friends isolated and that the U.S. is disinterested in the hemisphere. Since U.S. assistance for Plan Colombia was approved in the Clinton Administration, more than \$5 billion has been provided with bipartisan support that has helped Colombia to strengthen democracy, counter narco-traffickers, and greatly reduce levels of violence. The Colombia FTA must be seen as part of this commitment.

As recent events in the Andean region show, Colombia is fighting a brutal narco-terrorist insurgency by groups such as the FARC, which still holds some 750 kidnap victims, including three U.S. civilian contractors. In a rough neighborhood, Colombia promotes a model of open market democracy that supports fundamental U.S. national interests, but which some in Latin America openly scorn. With U.S. assistance, there has been a dramatic improvement in Colombia's security, with homicides down 40 percent, kidnapping by 83 percent, and terrorist attacks down by 76 percent, since 2002. The government of Colombia has regained control of many areas previously held by illegal armed groups, but much more needs to be done.

In addition, President Uribe has shown great personal courage in placing his government at the front lines of the war against narco-traffickers, who directly threaten the lives of American citizens here at home. Under his leadership, and with substantial assistance from the United States, Colombia has reduced cocaine production, cut opium poppy production by almost three-quarters, and nearly tripled the seizures of cocaine base destined for the U.S. between 2000 and 2005. Overall, there has been improvement in the Colombian government's efforts at interdiction, fighting precursors, and reducing the overall effect of drugs on the economy. Each year, approximately 400 metric tons is eradicated or interdicted by U.S.-Colombia efforts. In a testament to its close bilateral partnership with the United States, Colombia has dramatically increased their extradition of criminals to our country, from less than 100 when President Uribe took office in 2002 to well over 600 now.

We abhor and condemn in the strongest terms the violence against trade unionists, and all human rights abuses that have occurred in Colombia. Some acts of violence against trade unionists are

committed by illegal armed groups like FARC. However, while the situation in Colombia is far from perfect, there has been substantial progress on all fronts since President Uribe took office. For example, the number of homicides of trade unionists in Colombia continues to be far lower than the overall homicide rate for the general population. These improvements coincided with a notable downturn in attacks by paramilitaries and the FARC beginning in 2002, underscoring the linkable between levels of violence and human rights abuses in Colombia and the activities of illegal armed groups.

The government of Colombia has created a program that provides special security protection to some 9400 individuals, including 1900 trade unionists. In October 2006, the Prosecutor General's Office created a special labor unit to address priority cases of violence against trade unionists. Another key government initiative is to improve the administration of justice in Colombia to deliver better legal services and address a large backlog of crimes that were never brought to trial. In a separate initiative, President Uribe has led an effort to investigate and prosecute any and all government officials with paramilitary ties.

Defeating the FTA would hardly promote cooperation needed to advance the human rights and anti-violence campaign.

From an economic perspective, this is a "win-win" situation. Our market is already substantially open to Colombia's products, with over 90 percent of Colombian exports entering the United States duty free, while U.S. exports to Colombia face significant barriers, with tariffs up to 35 percent for industrial and consumer goods and much higher tariffs for agricultural products. In 2007, Colombia exported \$9.4 billion to the United States, virtually all of it duty-free as a result of the U.S. trade preference programs, while U.S. exporters shipped \$8.6 billion to Colombia under the handicap of significant Colombian tariffs, which would be removed over time by the FTA. Today Colombia has double-digit tariffs on paper and paper products, transportation equipment, building products and consumer goods. U.S. agricultural exports of over \$1 billion all face a duty there (for example, 15 percent Colombia tariffs on U.S. apples and oranges), while 99.9 percent of Colombia's agricultural exports to the United States were duty-free. The FTA will immediately eliminate tariffs on more than 80 percent of American exports of industrial and consumer goods, and over time, 100 percent, including information technology products, agricultural products, construction equipment, medical equipment, and electrical power generation equipment. This agreement will help our balance of trade.

We see the FTA as an important tool to support Colombia's social and economic development. Already, increased trade has helped Colombia's economy grow with GDP increasing from 1.7 percent in 2002 to 7 percent in 2007, and with poverty being reduced almost 20 percent since 2002. U.S. exports to the 14 nations with whom the United States has an FTA have grown some 40 percent faster than U.S. exports to the rest of the world. There is every reason to believe this will happen with Colombia.

We also hope that Congress will favorably consider reauthorizing and strengthening the Trade Adjustment Assistance program to help workers transition to new jobs.

With the sustained help of the United States and the strong leadership of President Uribe, Colombia has, in the words of a recent report, moved "back from the brink" of being a failed state to being an example of positive transformation in the world. Supporting this agreement will ensure our active role in maintaining stability and security in our hemisphere. Colombia has earned the support and

friendship of the United States. To delay passing the U.S.-Colombia FTA this year would send a negative signal to one of our closest allies in Latin America, and would be seized upon by our country's opponents as a sign of U.S. inconstancy at a critical time.

Bernard Aronson, former Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs

Ambassador Harriet Babbitt, former Permanent Representative to the Organization of American States

The Honorable James Bacchus, former Congressman (Florida) and former chairman, Appellate Body of the World Trade Organization

The Honorable Michael D. Barnes, former Congressman (Maryland) and former chairman, Western Hemisphere Subcommittee, House Foreign Affairs Committee

Rand Beers, former Assistant Secretary of State

The Honorable David Boren, former Senator (Oklahoma) and former Governor (Oklahoma)

The Honorable John Breaux, former Congressman and Senator (Louisiana) and former Senate Majority Whip

The Honorable William S. Cohen, former Congressman and Senator (Maine) and former Secretary of Defense

W. Bowman Cutter, former Assistant to the President for Economic Policy

William Daley, former Secretary of Commerce

John Deutch, former Deputy Secretary of Defense and former Director of Central Intelligence 1995-96

The Honorable Calvin M. "Cal" Dooley, former Congressman (California)

Ambassador Stuart E. Eizenstat, former Chief Domestic Policy Adviser to President Carter and former Deputy Secretary of the Treasury during the Clinton Administration

Ambassador Richard N. Gardner, former Ambassador to Italy and Spain

The Honorable Sam M. Gibbons, former Congressman (Florida) and former chairman, House Ways and Means Committee

The Honorable Dan Glickman, former Congressman (Kansas) and former Secretary of Agriculture

The Honorable Bob Graham, former Governor (Florida) and former Senator (Florida)

Ambassador Marc Grossman, former Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs

The Honorable Lee Hamilton, former Congressman (Indiana) and former chairman, House Committee on Foreign Affairs

John Hamre, former Deputy Secretary of Defense

The Honorable James R. Jones, former Congressman (Oklahoma) and former chairman, House Budget Committee, and former Ambassador to Mexico

The Honorable Bob Kerrey, former Governor (Nebraska) and former Senator (Nebraska)

General Barry R. McCaffrey, former Director of the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy and former Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Armed Forces Southern Command

Thomas F. "Mack" McLarty, former White House Chief of Staff and former Special Envoy for the Americas

Robert A. Pastor, former Director of Latin American and Caribbean Affairs, National Security Council

Ambassador Thomas R. Pickering, former Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs and former Ambassador (United Nations, El Salvador, India, Israel, Jordan, Nigeria, and Russia)

Ambassador Peter Romero, former Ambassador (Ecuador) and former Assistant Secretary of State

The Honorable Patricia Schroeder, former Congresswoman (Colorado)

The Honorable Donna Shalala, former Secretary of Health and Human Services

Ira Shapiro, former General Counsel and Ambassador, Office of the U.S. Trade Representative

The Honorable Steve Solarz, former Congressman (New York)

Maurice Sonnenberg, former member President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board, and former Vice Chair, National Commission on Terrorism

Ambassador Alexander F. Watson, former Ambassador (Peru), former Deputy Permanent U.S. Representative to the United Nations, and former Assistant Secretary of State for the Western Hemisphere

Frank G. Wisner, former Ambassador (Zambia, Egypt, Philippines, India) and former Under Secretary of Defense for Policy

R. James Woolsey, former Director of Central Intelligence 1993-95

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

February 14, 2008

The Honorable Charles Rangel
Chairman
House Committee on Ways and Means
U.S. House of Representatives
1102 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Jim McCrery
Ranking Member
House Committee on Ways and Means
U.S. House of Representatives
1139-E Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Sander Levin
Chairman, Sub-Committee on Trade
House Committee on Ways and Means
U.S. House of Representatives
1236 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Wally Herger
Ranking Member, Sub-Committee on Trade
House Committee on Ways and Means
U.S. House of Representatives
2268 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Rangel, Ranking Member McCrery, Chairman Levin, and Ranking Member Herger:

Thank you for your leadership over the past year in forging a new bipartisan consensus on U.S. trade policy. We were pleased to see this breakthrough result in Congressional approval of the U.S.-Peru Trade Promotion Agreement last year. We believe this consensus represents a positive step forward that can pave the way for consideration of the pending U.S.-Colombia Trade Promotion Agreement.

While thoughtful people disagree about whether Congress should approve the Colombia agreement, we believe these disagreements may best be acknowledged and addressed by the Committee on Ways and Means holding a public hearing on the agreement. Specifically, a number of stakeholders have raised concerns about the level of labor violence in Colombia.

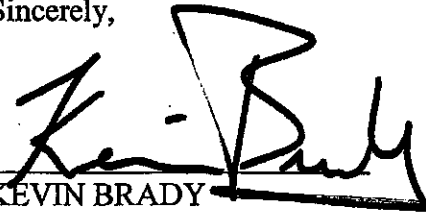
A full public hearing that focuses the attention of the Committee on the question of the level of labor violence in Colombia; the potential impact of the trade agreement on the obligation and ability of the Colombian Government to address the issue of labor violence; the broader impact of the agreement on businesses and workers in both the United States and Colombia; and the impact of the agreement on our long-term security interests would demonstrate the importance of these issues to the Committee.

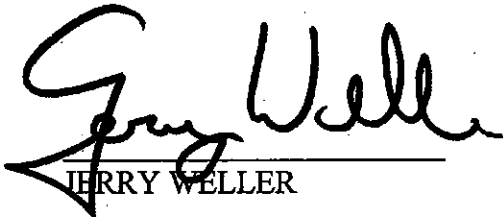
Such a hearing would allow for a full airing of the concerns of labor leaders in both the United States and Colombia and provide a venue for the Committee to signal its commitment to addressing these concerns. A hearing would further the spirit of bipartisanship established by the May 10th agreement in moving forward on a positive trade agenda that benefits workers and businesses in both countries.

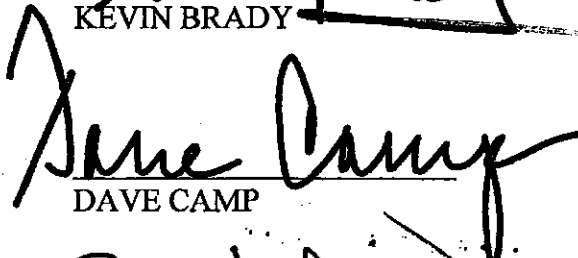
To address these important questions, to consider the concerns of our colleagues, and to hear the benefits others believe the agreement can offer, we urge you to begin the process of considering the U.S.-Colombia Trade Promotion Agreement by scheduling a hearing on the agreement as soon as possible.


Thank you again for your leadership, and we look forward to working with you in the upcoming year.

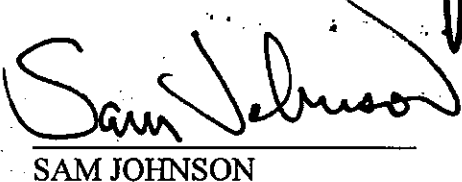
Sincerely,


KEVIN BRADY

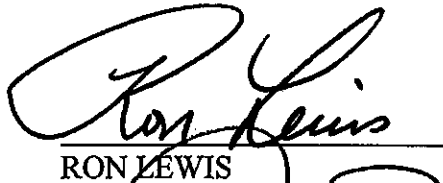

JERRY WELLER



DAVE CAMP

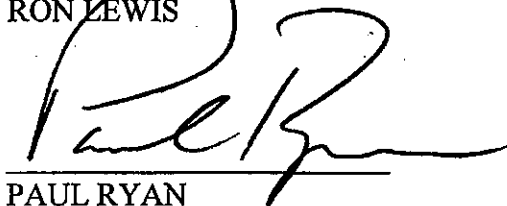

JIM RAMSTAD


SAM JOHNSON


KENNY HULSHOF


RON LEWIS


THOMAS REYNOLDS


PAUL RYAN


ERIC CANTOR


JOHN LINDER


DEVIN NUNES


PATRICK TIBERI


JON PORTER

*Letter from Former Secretaries of Commerce
To Members of the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate*

December 4, 2007

To Members of Congress:

The 110th Congress has an opportunity to demonstrate bipartisan leadership on the future of America's economic policy by approving Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) between the United States and Peru, Panama, Colombia and Korea. The United States needs the advantage these agreements provide to continue to expand economic growth at home and abroad. Furthermore, for the first time, leaders from both parties have agreed that the trade policy framework will strengthen labor and environmental protections in these countries.

Bilateral free trade agreements have proved to be one of the best ways to open up foreign markets to U.S. exporters. Last year, trade with countries with which the United States has FTAs was significantly greater than their relative share of the global economy. Although comprising only about 7 percent of global GDP (not including the United States), the 14 FTA countries accounted for over 42 percent of U.S. exports. Clearly, the four new FTAs would allow room for more growth.

American exports have been growing at 11 percent in 2007, a rate that is two and half times as fast as the 4.4 percent increase in U.S. imports. With this ongoing surge in exports, the U.S. trade deficit has fallen by 7.7 percent so far this year, compared to the same period in 2006. Highlighting the importance of exports, other recently released data on the economy showed that export expansion has accounted for 40 percent of U.S. economic growth over the last year. The Department of Commerce estimates that 5.69 million American jobs were supported by the export of manufactured goods and millions more jobs by service industries' exports.

Good trade agreements remove barriers, expand trade and help support incomes and better paying jobs in America. Consumers, workers, companies, farmers and ranchers benefit from agreements to further open global markets to U.S. exports. The overwhelming majority of exports from Peru, Colombia, Panama and Korea already enter the United States duty free while U.S. exports to these countries face significant tariffs. American producers deserve the same equal treatment. These FTAs will level the playing field and open new export opportunities for American business and agriculture.

We need to continue our record of exporting success and resultant economic growth with the passage of these four Free Trade Agreements.

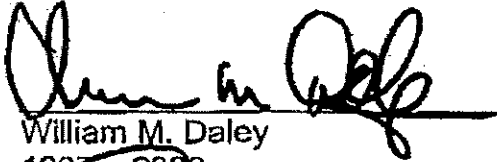
Sincerely,



Donald L. Evans
2001 - 2005



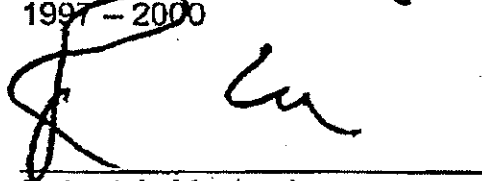
Norman Y. Mineta
2000 - 2001



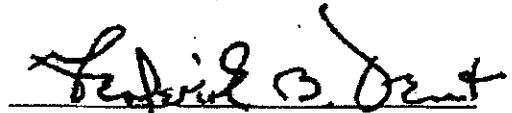
William M. Daley
1997 - 2000



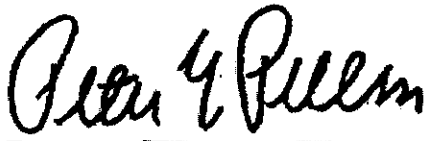
Barbara H. Franklin
1992 - 1993



Robert A. Mosbacher
1989 - 1992



Frederick B. Dent
1973 - 1975



Peter G. Peterson
1972 - 1973

CC: The Honorable George W. Bush, President of the United States
The Honorable Carlos Gutierrez, U.S. Secretary of Commerce
The Honorable Susan Schwab, U.S. Trade Representative



**Congress of the United States
House of Representatives**

November 8, 2007

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
H-232 The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Steny Hoyer
Majority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
H-107 The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Charles Rangel
Chairman
Committee on Ways & Means
U.S. House of Representatives
1102 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Sander Levin
Chairman, Subcommittee on Trade
Committee on Ways & Means
U.S. House of Representatives
1102 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Colleagues:

We are writing to you today regarding the recently concluded U.S.-Korea Free Trade Agreement (FTA). Specifically, we are interested in addressing this issue within a geopolitical context that underscores the importance of your careful consideration of the Agreement.

The United States and the Republic of Korea have shared political and economic relations for 125 years, dating back to the 1882 Treaty of Peace, Amity, Commerce and Navigation. This relationship became uniquely strengthened during the Korean War and has continued to build since then.

The Republic of Korea is a vital ally in Northeast Asia. Its key participation in the Six-Party Talks regarding North Korea's nuclear ambitions is central to the success of stemming the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, not only in that region but throughout the world.

South Korea also acts as a balance to the emerging economic and political dominance of China in East Asia and the Pacific.

These political and diplomatic matters do not exist in a vacuum. They are tied integrally to continuing economic growth and strong trade relationships across national boundaries.

The Republic of Korea is already the seventh-largest trading partner of the United States, the fifth largest market for U.S. agricultural products as well as the eleventh-largest

economy in the world. Reducing barriers to further trade will benefit South Korea and the United States economically, to be sure, but will also enhance the political and strategic alliance our two countries enjoy and remain firmly committed to. By promoting a more balanced trade and economic exchange – including more visits to the United States by South Korean business executives, workers, tourists and students (and vice versa) – we will surely make the U.S.-Korea geopolitical relationship even more resilient, comprehensive and solid than it already is.

As Congress embarks on its debate about the U.S.-Korea Free Trade Agreement, we remain mindful of the very real domestic concerns surrounding the FTA, but also wish to have the important geopolitical aspects of the situation be given full consideration alongside the fundamental economic issues.

We appreciate the time and attention you have given to this important matter.

Sincerely,

DIANE WATSON
Member of Congress

EDOLPHUS TOWNS
Member of Congress



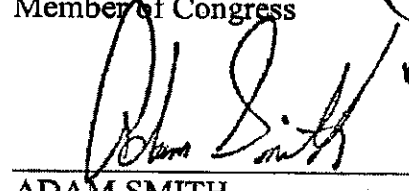
ALBIO SIRES
Member of Congress



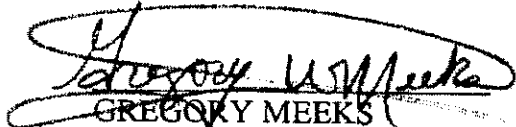
ENI FALEOMAVAEGA
Member of Congress



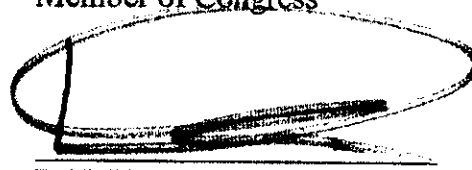
MADELEINE BORDALLO
Member of Congress



ADAM SMITH
Member of Congress



GREGORY MEEKS
Member of Congress



DAVID WU
Member of Congress



JAMES MORAN
Member of Congress



G.K. BUTTERFIELD
Member of Congress

An Open Letter to Congressional Democrats on Hemispheric Trade Expansion

Latin America is up for grabs. As Democrats, we are deeply concerned.

Not since the end of the Cold War has US influence in the region been so tenuous or our interests so clearly at stake. The Summit of the Americas agenda, agreed by consensus at the instigation of President Clinton and Vice President Gore, has frayed. Anti-US populism is loud and getting louder. Venezuela's leader, emboldened by high energy prices, is aggressively promoting an alternative vision for Latin America and the Caribbean. Divisions among our neighbors are deepening with serious implications for the United States. Even Castro may be back in the game.

Within this new reality, the United States Congress faces a decision of historic consequence: whether, by standing with those in Latin America who have stood with us, to build the economy and create jobs by opening markets. Along with comprehensive immigration reform, increased development assistance, and renewed support for Plan Colombia, there is nothing more important for US national and economic security interests in the region than passing trade agreements with nations whose leaders have made politically-courageous efforts to link their economies to ours.

The decision should not be in doubt. Now that a deal has been struck by Democratic leaders in Congress and the Administration on a bipartisan trade policy framework, it is time to get behind pending agreements with Colombia, Panama, and Peru. It would be the height of irony were we to talk of "losing" Latin America while refusing to take actions that would directly support fundamental relationships and interests in the region.

That is not to say everything is perfect in the countries in question. Far from it. Both proponents and opponents of the Colombia agreement have noted the high levels of violence there, as well as recent corruption and wiretapping scandals. But the level of violence in Colombia—though still too high—has steadily and significantly declined under President Uribe. Rather than hiding the scandals or minimizing them, Colombia is taking steps to root them out and cleanse the political system, even while recognizing that more must be done, including bringing to justice those who have committed crimes against unionists.

These are serious matters, and Democrats are right to bring them up and insist on progress. But walking away from the Colombia trade agreement or postponing it until conditions are perfect would send an unambiguous signal to our friends and opponents alike that the United States is an unreliable partner without a vision for cooperation in our hemisphere. Colombia would certainly re-evaluate its relationship with the United States, a process that is already underway. And the same is true with Panama, Peru, and others such as Uruguay and Brazil who are making courageous political decisions to enhance relations with the United States despite strong domestic and external political pressure.

As Democrats, we fully recognize that asking the US Congress to vote on these trade agreements is politically charged. Nonetheless, rejecting these agreements would set back regional US interests for a generation. What interests are at stake? In the first instance, US economic opportunity. Because the fact is that the United States is already virtually open to products from Colombia, Panama, and Peru through unilateral trade preference programs, *but those economies do not give reciprocal benefits to the United States*. Far from being “job killing,” these trade agreements would open markets wider to US goods and services and therefore *support* jobs in the United States.

Second, for the past 15 years, the United States on a bipartisan basis has supported economic growth in the Andean region in opposition to drug traffickers and guerrilla movements. In the hemispheric fight against illegal narcotics, trade agreements with Colombia and Peru would lock in trade relations for the long-term, drawing the kind of direct foreign investment that all nations need to develop, while also opening new markets. US exports would increase, economic opportunities would be created, cooperation against illegal narcotics would be maintained, ultimately supporting democratic governance in a troubled region.

Third, US regional influence is at risk. Peru’s President Garcia has stood up to Venezuela’s Chavez at a time when virtually all other regional leaders have kept mum. He would be unlikely to do so again were Peru’s trade agreement to go down. As for Panama, President Torrijos has publicly welcomed US participation in the expansion of the strategically significant canal, and a trade agreement with Panama would surely improve the competitiveness of US companies bidding on the massive canal expansion project. It would also, importantly, lock in a mutually rewarding relationship even as former Panamanian dictator Manuel Noriega is set to be released from his Florida jail cell where he has served time for drug trafficking.

From the Good Neighbor Policy, to the Alliance for Progress, to a focus on human rights and the Summit of the Americas, Democratic leadership has been pivotal to the promotion of US interests in the Western Hemisphere. The time for leadership is again at hand. We must not walk away now.

Former Members of the Congress and Senate

James Bacchus, Michael Barnes, Don Bonker, Tony Coelho, Cal Dooley, Sam Gibbons, Bob Graham, Bill Hughes, Bennett Johnston, Harry Johnston, Jim Jones, Buddy MacKay, Sam Nunn, Leon Panetta

Former Cabinet Officials, Ambassadors, and Foreign and Trade Policy Advisors

Anne Alonzo, Bruce Babbitt, Harriet Babbitt, Rand Beers, Sandy Berger, Henry Cisneros, Nelson Cunningham, Stuart Eizenstat, Eric Farnsworth, Richard Feinberg, Gordon Giffin, Marc Ginsberg, Dan Glickman, Ed Gresser, Anthony Harrington, Chuck Manatt, David Marchick, Will Marshall, Mack McLarty, Robert Pastor, Peter Romero, David Rothkopf, Chris Sabatini, Ronald Scheman, Donna Shalala, Ira Shapiro, Maurice Sonnenberg, Alexander Watson, Jonathan Winer

Open Letter to Congress

from Former Commanders of the U.S. Southern Command

Supporting the U.S.-Colombia Trade Promotion Agreement

We are writing to urge your support for the U.S.-Colombia Trade Promotion Agreement. This vital agreement will advance U.S. interests in Colombia, a strategically located country that is arguably our closest ally in Latin America. It will also underscore our deep commitment to stability and growth in the strategically important Andean region, which depends on Colombia's continued progress as a resilient and democratic society.

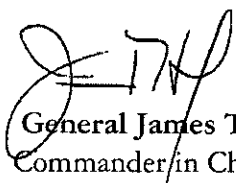
Colombia's transformation over the past decade is a triumph of brave and principled Colombians. It is also a remarkable achievement of bipartisan U.S. foreign policy. Violence has fallen to its lowest level in a generation, and 45,000 fighters have been demobilized as the country's narco-guerrilla groups have lost legitimacy. While drug-trafficking poses a continuing threat, Colombia's leaders have eliminated two-thirds of its opium production, and more than 500 traffickers have been extradited during the Uribe administration — by far the most extraditions from any country to the United States.

Colombia's economic resurgence has been a critical factor in its recent progress. Robust investment has boosted economic growth and development. The creation of new jobs has provided tens of thousands of Colombians with long-term alternatives to narcotics trafficking or illegal emigration.

The U.S.-Colombia Trade Promotion Agreement will build upon these recent advances to enhance the long-term prospects for peace, stability, and development in Colombia. Providing new incentives for investment and job creation, this landmark accord will help ensure that Colombia stays on the path of economic openness, the rule of law, and transparency.

It is in our national interest to help Colombia progress along the road toward democratic consolidation and economic development. This trade agreement will advance U.S. security and economic interests by forging a deeper partnership. Finally, approving this agreement will meet our duty to stand shoulder-to-shoulder with Colombians as they have stood by the United States as friends and allies. For all of these reasons, we strongly urge Congress to approve the U.S.-Colombia Trade Promotion Agreement.

Sincerely,



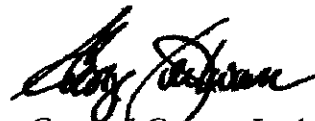
General James T. Hill
Commander in Chief,
United States Southern Command 2002-2004



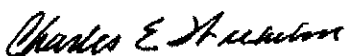
General Barry McCaffrey
Commander in Chief,
United States Southern Command 1994-1996



General Peter Pace
Commander in Chief,
United States Southern Command 2000-2001



General George Joulwan
Commander in Chief,
United States Southern Command 1990-1993



General Charles E. Wilhelm
Commander in Chief,
United States Southern Command 1997-2000

April 29, 2008

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House of Representatives
of the United States of America
Washington, D.C.

Dear Madam Speaker:

Since the reestablishment of democracy in Latin America, the countries of our region have made great efforts to fight poverty and social inequality, create opportunities, and improve the quality of life of our peoples. Our efforts are based on a commitment to social justice, the rule of law and democratic governance. In these efforts, the United States has been our friend, our neighbor and our ally.

In the last 20 years, relations between the United States and Latin America have been strengthened by growing economic and commercial ties. Both Democratic and Republican administrations have offered a new partnership based not only on the continuation of unilateral trade preference programs but also on the goal of eventually moving forward to bilateral or regional trade schemes that would secure benefits for all.

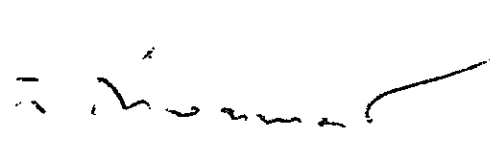
Latin America has seen this partnership as a promising one. Heads of State in the region have embraced the idea as a positive sign that the United States is bringing the region together, trying to work with us as partners for a more prosperous common future. Furthermore, it is clear that the friendship between the United States and Latin America cannot be based exclusively on international cooperation, as important as that is, or solely on unilateral trade preference programs, which have limited scope, duration and certainty. Our countries are instead looking for new opportunities and fair treatment.

In this context, trade agreements are an important tool for fighting poverty and generating opportunities in the Hemisphere. Chile, with the most open economy in Latin America, has signed free trade agreements with many countries around the world and has managed to reduce poverty by almost two thirds in the last 17 years. This is an example that many wish to follow, because the fewer goods that are exported by Latin American countries, the higher risk they face of exporting people through massive migration toward developed countries.

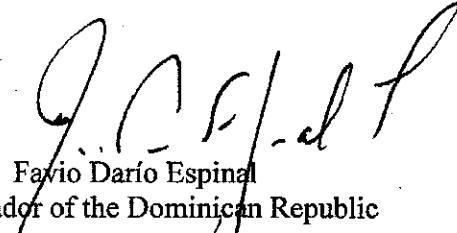
Latin America and the United States are joined by geography, culture and common values. For many years, the exchange of goods and services across borders has been a vital factor in maintaining a mutually beneficial relationship. The approval of the free trade agreement between the United States and Colombia would be another step toward deepening that relationship, toward fair and equitable integration of our nations, and most importantly, toward securing the stability and peace of the Western Hemisphere.

With deep respect, we would like to emphasize the importance of the United States Congress's approving this agreement, considering the substantial benefits not only for the people of Colombia but also for the people of the United States and, ultimately, for the whole region.

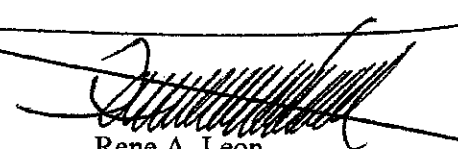
We express our highest and most distinguished consideration to you and commend you for your work in forging a stronger relationship among all our nations.



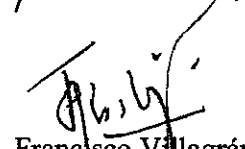
F. Tomás Dueñas
Ambassador of Costa Rica




Fabio Darío Espinal
Ambassador of the Dominican Republic



Rene A. Leon
Ambassador of El Salvador



Francisco Villagrán
Ambassador of Guatemala



Roberto Flores Bermúdez
Ambassador of Honduras

Alan García
Presidente de la República del Perú

Lima, April 25, 2008

The Honorable Harry Reid

Majority Leader

United States Senate

Washington, D.C. 20151

Dear Senator,

I have the honor to address Your Excellency concerning the Free Trade Agreement signed between the United States of America and Colombia, which is pending ratification by the US Congress. I am aware that this process has been delayed because of an understandable and special juncture.

Notwithstanding, allow me to ponder about the importance for the whole region that a country like Colombia, deeply committed with the strengthening of its democratic institutions and waging a head-on fight against drug trafficking and terrorism, can depend on an instrument that is key to the economic and social development of its people.

Alan García
Presidente de la República del Perú

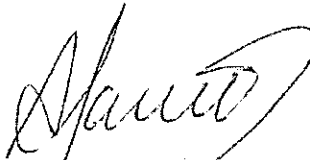
This treaty will permit the consolidation of a model of development in the region that places representative democracy, economic freedom, free trade, and the unrestricted respect for individual freedoms and human rights above other views that promote development models that have proved to be inefficient in the past.

In this regard, the support of the United States is fundamental to empower the position of those countries that share the same values and a common vision for our development. Only the full participation of Colombia in a mechanism of this kind can effectively help us confront the challenges that we face and will consolidate an alliance between the United States and the region.

Consequently, I trust that the United States will respond to these historical challenges that not only will benefit Colombia but the whole region.

Remembering your kind visit to Peru, my wife and I would like to send you our warmest regards.

Sincerely Yours,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Alan García', written in a cursive style.

Alan García Pérez

President of the Republic of Peru

Congreso de Colombia

Bogotá D.C., abril 15 de 2008

Señora

NANCY PELOSI

Presidenta Cámara de Representantes de Estados Unidos
Washington D.C.

Señora Presidenta:

La decisión de la Cámara de Representantes de Estados Unidos de congelar la aprobación del Tratado de Libre Comercio con Colombia, constituye un golpe a la economía de nuestro país y, al mismo tiempo, nos da un trato de colonia que no se corresponde con un aliado de primer orden.

La posición del Partido Demócrata de involucrar a Colombia en un proceso electoral interno es injusta, porque las políticas de Estado deben estar por encima de consideraciones partidistas.

El argumento de que la firma del TLC pone en riesgo a líderes sindicales y trabajadores sindicalizados es aún más grave porque Colombia, en el marco de la **Política de Seguridad Democrática**, ha hecho grandes esfuerzos por impedir que crímenes de tal naturaleza se produzcan. Las cifras hablan por sí solas. Mientras en 2002 se registraron 196 homicidios contra trabajadores sindicalizados. Para 2007 la cifra bajó a 26. La meta es acabar con ese flagelo y lograr una Nación próspera, en paz y desarrollo con justicia social.

Congreso de Colombia

Para alcanzar esas metas, generar empleo lícito y fortalecer nuestra economía, Señora Presidenta, requerimos del apoyo y la cooperación decidida de nuestro mayor socio comercial. La historia reciente de Colombia es dolorosa porque cientos de colombianos han sacrificado sus vidas en la guerra contra el terrorismo y el narcotráfico, estimulados desde naciones consumidoras.

En estos momentos, Colombia necesita de su invaluable colaboración en el trámite del Tratado de Libre Comercio con Estados Unidos.

Cordial saludo,



OSCAR ARBOLEDA PALACIO
Presidente Cámara de Representantes de Colombia

NON-OFFICIAL TRANSLATION

Congress of Colombia

Ms. Nancy Pelosi, Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C.

Bogotá, April 15, 2008

Madam Speaker:

The decision of the United States House of Representatives to stay approval of the Free Trade Agreement with Colombia is a blow to the Colombian economy, and affords colonial treatment to us that is unbecoming one of the United States' staunchest allies.

The Democratic Party's decision to involve Colombia in an internal electoral process is unfair, as national policy should rightly be placed above partisan considerations.

The argument that signing the FTA puts union leaders and workers at risk is even more seriously erroneous, given that under the framework of the Democratic Security Policy, Colombia has made great efforts to prevent crimes of that nature from occurring. The numbers speak for themselves: while 196 union workers were murdered in 2002, only 26 such deaths occurred in 2007. Our goal is to put an end to this scourge and achieve a prosperous, peaceful, developed nation with social justice.

In order to reach those goals, generate legitimate employment, and strengthen our economy, Madam Speaker, we require the decisive support and cooperation of our largest trade partner. Colombia's recent history is painful because hundreds of Colombians have sacrificed their lives in the war on terrorism and drug trafficking, both of which are stoked by consumer nations.

At this time Colombia needs your invaluable cooperation in the process of the Free Trade Agreement with the United States.

Yours truly,

[Signature]

Oscar Arboleda Palacio, Speaker
House of Representatives of Colombia

Brussels, 5 February 2008
CAB24/PM/HH D/08/101

The Honourable
Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Madam Speaker,

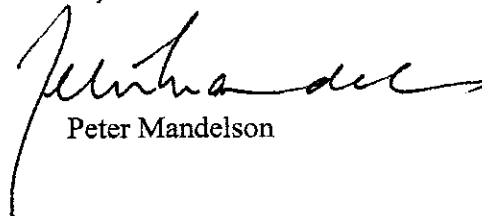
During my visit to Latin America last month I spent a few days in Colombia. I met representatives from business, civil society and the Government, and talked to President Alvaro Uribe. The main purpose of my trip was to pursue the negotiations on free trade between the European Union and the Andean Community including Colombia.

I am taking the liberty of sharing with you my assessment of the situation in the country. I found in President Uribe a single-minded and determined President, who is wholeheartedly committed to restoring the rule of law, the respect of human rights and prosperity to his country. Thanks in part to support from the United States I believe he is succeeding in breaking the cycle of drift and violence. He is well aware that he needs now to take the economy to a higher level by creating business and spreading employment opportunities amongst Colombians. Preferential trade agreements with the US and EU are central to that strategy.

I have followed the difficult considerations in Congress as you weigh the domestic situation in Colombia and discuss the merits of approving your Free Trade Agreement. This is a decision for Congress alone to take, and a narrow definition of the EU competing trade interests would even suggest Europe will gain if the deliberative process in Washington is delayed.

I am, however, sending you an expression of hope for a positive early decision on the US-Colombia FTA. I am doing this in the spirit of the transatlantic partnership and of our overriding shared objective of promoting stability, democracy and growth wherever we can in Latin America. I personally hope that Alvaro Uribe and his Government's ambitious project for Colombia may succeed.

Yours sincerely,


Peter Mandelson

c.c.: Senator Harry Reid




**Señora Nancy Pelosi
Presidenta de la Cámara de Representantes de los
Estados Unidos de América**

En los últimos veinte años, diversos países de América Latina han hecho notables avances en la construcción de democracias estables; la promoción del libre comercio y el mejoramiento de la calidad de vida de sus habitantes. Los Estados Unidos de América han apoyado estos procesos utilizando, entre otros mecanismos, la suscripción, ratificación y ejecución de tratados de libre comercio. Así, México, Chile, los países centroamericanos y República Dominicana cuentan hoy con acuerdos de este tipo con su país. Estos esquemas, mutuamente benéficos, son valiosos instrumentos para el desarrollo.

Como es de su conocimiento, Colombia, Panamá y Perú también han suscrito tratados con Estados Unidos, pero éstos aún no han sido ratificados. Considero que la entrada en vigor de estos acuerdos sería del mayor beneficio, tanto para esos países, como para Estados Unidos y, en general, para las relaciones entre su país y América Latina. Asimismo, la ratificación de dichos tratados enviaría una señal importante del compromiso que todos tenemos con la integración comercial y con el desarrollo de nuestro continente. Por ello, respetuosamente la exhorto a hacer lo que esté a su alcance, dentro de sus atribuciones, para que así suceda.

Me valgo de esta oportunidad para enviarle un cordial saludo y para reiterarle la seguridad de mi distinguida consideración.

15 de octubre de 2007.



**Felipe Calderón Hinojosa
Presidente de los
Estados Unidos Mexicanos**

NON-OFFICIAL TRANSLATION

UNITED MEXICAN STATES

Ms. Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House of Representatives of the
United States of America

Madam Speaker:

In the past 20 years, the countries of Latin America have made significant progress in building stable democracies, promoting free trade, and improving the quality of life of their citizens. The United States of America has supported these processes through, among other mechanisms, the signature, ratification, and implementation of free trade agreements. Mexico, Chile, the countries of Central America, and the Dominican Republic are now among those that have concluded this type of agreement with your country. These instruments are mutually beneficially and a valuable tool for development.

As you know, Colombia, Panama, and Peru have also signed agreements with the United States, but these have yet to be ratified. I believe that the entry into force of these agreements would be of the greatest benefit not only to those countries but also to the United States and, in general, to relations between your country and Latin America. Moreover, the ratification of the agreements would send an important signal of the commitment that we all share with respect to commercial integration and the development of our hemisphere. I respectfully urge you, therefore, to do everything in your power to ensure that this occurs.

I avail myself of this opportunity to assure you of my cordial regards and to reiterate to you the assurances of my highest consideration.

October 15, 2007
[Signature]

Felipe Calderón Hinojosa
President of the United Mexican States

Oscar Arias Sánchez

Presidente de la República

San José, 10 de octubre de 2007

Señora
Nancy Pelosi
Presidenta de la Cámara de Representantes
de los Estados Unidos de América
Washington, D.C.

Estimada señora:

Reciba un saludo cordial y las seguridades de mi alta y distinguida consideración, hacia usted y hacia la labor que desempeña en una de las instancias más democráticas del mundo: la Cámara de Representantes de los Estados Unidos de América.

Desde la recuperación de las democracias en casi la totalidad de América Latina, los países de nuestra región hemos hecho un esfuerzo considerable por atacar las raíces de la pobreza, de la desigualdad social, de la falta de oportunidades, del mejoramiento de los servicios básicos, entre otros. En esta lucha nos impulsa, antes que nada, un sentido humanitario y de justicia social, pero también la conciencia de que los problemas que crónicamente ha arrastrado América Latina, siguen siendo las trampas para el resurgimiento del populismo, de las restricciones a las libertades y, en última instancia, del discurso autoritario.

Conocemos perfectamente que los países de América Latina no consolidarán completamente sus democracias, en el tanto no sean capaces de fortalecer la base de bienestar social y económico que debe sustentarlas. Es por ello que la tarea de mejorar la calidad de vida de nuestros habitantes es, sin duda alguna, nuestra más perentoria tarea.

Los esfuerzos que hemos realizado en este sentido han sido acompañados, sin duda alguna, por el apoyo de los Estados Unidos, un país al que consideramos nuestro amigo, más que nuestro vecino o nuestro aliado.

Sin embargo, la amistad que entrelaza a los Estados Unidos con América Latina no puede basarse exclusivamente en la cooperación internacional, por importante que ésta sea. En muchos aspectos, los países latinoamericanos no pedimos de Estados Unidos caridad, sino tan sólo oportunidades y trato igualitario. Este es el caso de los Tratados de Libre Comercio que, a lo largo de la última década, se han venido firmando entre Estados Unidos y los países latinoamericanos, como México, Chile, los países centroamericanos y la República Dominicana.

Para las naciones latinoamericanas, los Tratados de Libre Comercio son una poderosa herramienta de combate a la pobreza y de generación de oportunidades. Chile, la economía más abierta de América Latina y que cuenta con Tratados de Libre Comercio con muchos países del mundo, ha logrado reducir la pobreza a casi una tercera parte en los últimos 17 años. Este es un ejemplo que muchos desean seguir, pues entre menos bienes exporten los países latinoamericanos, más se exponen al riesgo de exportar personas, a través de la migración masiva hacia los países desarrollados.

Costa Rica ha sabido comprenderlo muy bien, y esta es la razón por la cual el pasado 7 de octubre hemos ratificado, en el primer referéndum de nuestra historia, el Tratado de Libre Comercio que en el año 2004 firmamos con los Estados Unidos. Otras naciones latinoamericanas, sin embargo, a pesar de haber logrado negociar y firmar un Tratado de Libre Comercio como el nuestro, no han logrado aún su ratificación por parte de los Estados Unidos. Tal es el caso de Panamá, Perú y Colombia, los cuales negociaron sus acuerdos comerciales antes del vencimiento de las facultades especiales presidenciales conocidas como *fast track*, y hoy esperan la aprobación de los Tratados en el seno de una Cámara de Representantes con mayoría demócrata.

Con humildad y profundo respeto, quisiera sugerir la importancia de la ratificación de estos acuerdos por parte del Congreso de los Estados Unidos, pensando no sólo en el beneficio de las naciones latinoamericanas mencionadas, beneficio que sería considerable, sino también en el beneficio de los estadounidenses, que pueden derivar importantes consecuencias en términos de consumo y expansión de mercados.

Latinoamérica y Estados Unidos están indefectiblemente unidos en razón de territorio y vecindad. Desde hace muchos años, también el intercambio de bienes y servicios que se realiza a través de las fronteras, es un factor cardinal en el mantenimiento de una relación que es inevitable y de la cual tanto unos como otros podemos sacar un gran provecho. La aprobación de los Tratados de Libre Comercio de Estados Unidos con Panamá, Colombia y Perú sería un paso más en la profundización de esa relación, un paso más hacia una integración justa y equitativa entre nuestras naciones.

Sin otro particular y reiterándole mis buenos deseos,

Oscar Arias



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Oscar Arias Sánchez
President of the Republic of Costa Rica

San José, October 10, 2007

Ms. Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House of Representatives
of the United States of America
Washington, D.C.

Madam Speaker:

I salute the work that you are undertaking the United States House of Representatives, one of the world's most democratic bodies.

Since the restoration of democracy in almost all of Latin America, the countries of our region have made a considerable effort to fight poverty, social inequality, and the lack of opportunities, and to improve basic services, among other efforts. We are inspired in this struggle more than anything by a humanitarian sense of social justice, but also by an awareness that the problems that have chronically plagued Latin America continue to be springboards for a resurgence of populism, limits on freedoms, and ultimately, authoritarianism.

We are fully aware of the fact that the Latin American countries will not fully consolidate their democracies so long as they are not able to strengthen the foundation of the social and economic well-being that needs to sustain them. Thus, the job of improving the quality of life of our citizens is beyond doubt our most imperative task.

The efforts that we have undertaken in this regard have clearly been sustained by the support of the United States, a country that we consider to be our friend, more than just our neighbor or our ally.

Yet the friendship that binds the United States and Latin America together cannot be based exclusively on international cooperation, however important that may be. In many regards, the countries of Latin America do not seek charity from the United States, but rather opportunities and equal treatment. This is true as well with respect to the free trade agreements which such Latin American countries as Mexico, Chile, the Central America countries, and the Dominican Republic have signed with the United States over the past ten years.

For the Latin American nations, the free trade agreements are a powerful tool for fighting poverty and for generating opportunities. Chile, the most open economy in Latin America, already has a free trade agreement with many of the world's countries and has managed to reduce its poverty by almost one-third in the past 17 years. This is an example that many wish to follow, since the fewer goods exported by the Latin American countries, the greater the risk they run of exporting persons through massive migration to the developed countries.

This is something that Costa Rica has understood very well, which is why this past October 7, we ratified, in the first referendum in our country's history, the Free Trade Agreement that we signed with the United States in 2004. Other Latin American countries, however, while negotiating and signing a Free Trade Agreement like ours, have still not had their agreements ratified by the United States. Such countries include Panama, Peru, and Colombia, which negotiated their trade agreements prior to the expiration of the special presidential "fast track"

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authority, and today await approval of their agreements by a House of Representatives with a democratic majority.

With humility and profound respect, I wish to underscore the importance of Congressional ratification of these Agreements, for I believe that they will not only benefit considerably the Latin American nations in question, but also the United States, which will be able to derive significant advantages in terms of commercial consumption and market expansion.

Latin America and the United States are inescapably linked by reason of territory and proximity. For many years, the exchange of goods and services across our borders has been a key factor in maintaining this ineluctable relationship from which we can all derive great advantage. Approval of the Free Trade Agreements with Panama, Colombia, and Peru would be a great step forward in the enhancement of this relationship, a step towards achieving fair and equitable commercial integration among our countries.

With my best regards,

[s] Oscar Arias
[Presidential stamp]

Managua, 3 de octubre de 2007

Apreciada Señora Presidenta:

En los últimos veinte años, países de América Latina han hecho notables avances en el propósito de construir democracias estables, promover el libre comercio y mejorar la calidad de vida de sus habitantes. En esos propósitos se han encontrado con no pocos obstáculos, que las más de las veces han sido superados con esfuerzo e imaginación.

Estados Unidos ha jugado un papel importante en la apertura de mercados, suscribiendo, ratificando y ejecutando tratados de libre comercio. México, Chile, los países centroamericanos y República Dominicana cuentan hoy con ese valioso instrumento de desarrollo que es el tratado de libre comercio con Estados Unidos. Otros países han suscrito tratados, pero éstos no han sido ratificados aún. Ello es lo que motiva esta misiva.

Colombia, Panamá y Perú, antes del vencimiento de las facultades especiales conocidas como *fast track*, firmaron sendos tratados de Libre Comercio con Estados Unidos. Nosotros consideramos que sería del mayor beneficio para esos países, para Estados Unidos y en general, para las relaciones entre su país y América Latina, que dichos tratados fueran ratificados. Los procesos de ratificación de los tratados de libre comercio encuentran obstáculos producto de la incomprensión, a pesar de lo cual todos los países con los cuales se han suscrito han completado, o están próximos a completar, sus respectivos procedimientos constitucionales.

Estamos seguros de que al Congreso de Estados Unidos le anima el deseo de ratificar los convenios. De hacerlo, enviaría una señal importante del compromiso que todos tenemos con la integración comercial de nuestro continente. Es por esa razón que nos permitimos encarecerle que haga lo que

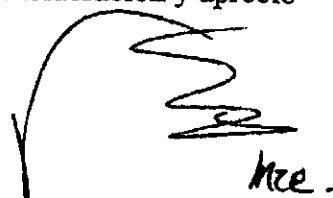
.....esté a su

esté a su alcance dentro de sus atribuciones para que, Colombia, Panama y Perú puedan gozar pronto de los beneficios de un tratado de Libre Comercio con Estados Unidos en plena vigencia.

Al agradecer su atención a la presente nota, aprovechamos la ocasión para reiterarle las muestras de nuestra mayor consideración y aprecio

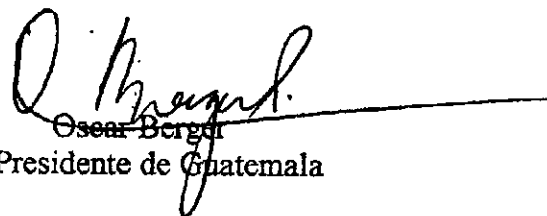


Elías Antonio Saca
Presidente de El Salvador



Manuel Zelaya
Presidente de Honduras

Daniel Ortega Saavedra
Presidente de Nicaragua



Oscar Berger
Presidente de Guatemala

Señora Nancy Pelosi
Presidenta de la Cámara de Representantes
de los Estados Unidos de América
Washington, D.C.

NON-OFFICIAL TRANSLATION

Managua, October 3, 2007

Madam Speaker:

In the past 20 years, the countries of Latin America have made significant progress in building stable democracies, promoting free trade, and improving the quality of life of their citizens. In their efforts to achieve these goals, they have encountered numerous obstacles that they have most always overcome with effort and imagination.

The United States has played an important role in opening our markets, signing, approving, and implementing free trade agreements. Mexico, Chile, the countries of Central America, and the Dominican Republic are now among those that have concluded this valuable instrument, the Free Trade Agreement, with the United States. Other countries have signed agreements, but they have not yet been ratified, which is the reason behind this letter.

Prior to the expiration of the special "fast track" authority, Colombia, Panama, and Peru each signed free trade agreements with the United States. We believe that it would be of great benefit to those countries, to the United States and, in general, to relations between your country and Latin America, if those agreements were ratified. The free trade agreement ratification process has encountered obstacles born of a lack of understanding, despite the fact that all the countries that have signed these agreements have completed, or are close to completing, their respective constitutional procedures.

We are certain that the United States Congress wishes to ratify the agreements. By doing so, it would send an important signal reflecting the commitment that we all have in the commercial integration of our hemisphere. We entreat you, therefore to do everything in your power to ensure that Colombia, Panama, and Peru will soon be able to enjoy the benefits of a fully effective Free Trade Agreement with the United States.

We thank you for your attention to this matter and ask you to accept, Madam Speaker, the assurances of our highest consideration and esteem.

[Signature]
Elías Antonio Saca
President of El Salvador

[Signature]
Manual Zelaya
President of Honduras

Daniel Ortega Saavedra
President of Nicaragua

[Signatura]
Oscar Berger
President of Guatemala

Ms. Nancy Pelosi,
Speaker of the House of Representatives
of the United States of America,
Washington, D.C.



Santiago de Chile, 23 de Abril, 2007.

Honorable Representante
Señora Nancy Pelosi
US Chamber of Representatives
Capitol Hill
Washington D.C.

Honorable señora Líder de la Mayoría:

Con gran alegría la he visto convertirse en la primera mujer Líder de la Mayoría en la historia del Congreso de los Estados Unidos. Una vez más la felicito sinceramente y le desco el mejor de los éxitos.

En esta oportunidad tengo el agrado de dirigirme a usted con el fin de compartir algunas ideas sobre la realidad económica y social que enfrentan las poblaciones de varios países latinoamericanos y, en particular, los menos desarrollados.

Considero que la positiva realidad que ha creado el Tratado de Libre Comercio entre Chile y los Estados Unidos de Norteamérica puede constituir un elemento útil cuando el Congreso de su país deba pronunciarse sobre la aprobación de los Tratados de Libre Comercio entre los Estados Unidos y Perú, Panamá y Colombia.

Transcurridos más de tres años desde la entrada en vigencia de nuestro acuerdo comercial bilateral, la evaluación de sus efectos tanto por parte de mi gobierno como de la opinión pública chilena es claramente positiva. El comercio entre nuestros países ha crecido en un 130% en los últimos tres años. Este vigoroso crecimiento del comercio bilateral ha contribuido a generar más y mejores empleos en Chile y también a que nuevas empresas - en su mayoría medianas y pequeñas -, se incorporen por primera vez al proceso exportador.

Asimismo, el Acuerdo de Libre Comercio con los Estados Unidos -junto a los que Chile ha firmado con otros países y regiones del mundo-, ha sido un factor fundamental para reducir nuestros índices de pobreza y mejorar nuestra capacidad productiva y tecnológica. Estamos convencidos que el libre comercio es un poderoso motor de crecimiento y progreso, aspectos fundamentales para ampliar y profundizar la democracia y sus instituciones.



Deseo subrayar también que en materias tan importantes como la ambiental y laboral estamos trabajando en estrecha colaboración con las autoridades de su país en proyectos orientados a mejorar la calidad y fortalecer el cumplimiento de nuestras leyes y regulaciones, a fin de alcanzar estándares internacionales. Ello, a mi juicio, es indispensable para competir exitosamente en una economía cada vez más globalizada.

Como usted conoce, varios países latinoamericanos cuentan con nuevos gobernantes, todos ellos elegidos de manera democrática. Sin embargo, un importante número de sus ciudadanos viven en condiciones de pobreza extrema, sin acceso a la salud y la educación, como tampoco acceden a una alimentación adecuada ni a trabajos dignos. Muchas de las familias latinoamericanas están encabezadas por mujeres, las cuales sufren discriminación o carecen de conocimiento o capacidades mínimas para obtener un trabajo que les permita sacar a sus hijos del círculo vicioso de la pobreza y falta de oportunidades.

Por estas razones, estoy segura que las respectivas aprobaciones por el Congreso de su país, de los Tratados de Libre Comercio entre los Estados Unidos y Perú, Panamá y Colombia, junto a las prórrogas de las preferencias arancelarias para Bolivia y Ecuador, recientemente aprobadas, beneficiarán tanto a éstos países como a todo el continente americano, cuya aspiración común es avanzar por la senda del desarrollo económico y social en paz, libertad y democracia. Estas aprobaciones también serán de beneficio para la relación de los Estados Unidos con la América Latina, puesto que estimularán el comercio y los intercambios, así como las relaciones económicas y políticas globales.

Junto con saludarla muy atentamente, hago propicia esta ocasión para manifestarle las seguridades de mi más alta y distinguida consideración.

Michelle Bachelet Jeria

NON-OFFICIAL TRANSLATION

Santiago de Chile, April 23, 2007

The Honorable
Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House of Representatives
Washington, DC

Dear Madame Speaker:

It is with great joy that I again congratulate you for having been appointed as the first female Speaker in the history of the U.S. Congress, and I wish you great success in your tenure.

On this occasion, I am pleased to write you in order to share with you some ideas on the economic and social reality that the populations of many Latin American countries face, particularly the less developed ones.

I believe that the positive reality generated by the Free Trade Agreement between the United States and Chile, might constitute a useful element for the Congress of your country when the moment comes to decide on the approval of the Free Trade Agreements between the United States and Peru, Panama, and Colombia.

Three years after our bilateral trade agreement came into force, the evaluation of its effects made by my Government, as well as the one of the Chilean public opinion, is clearly positive. During the abovementioned period, trade between our countries has increased 130%. This vigorous growth of our bilateral trade not only has contributed to create more and better sources of employment in Chile, but has also allowed new enterprises –most of them small and mid size- to join the export process for the first time.

Furthermore, our Free Trade Agreement, together with the ones Chile has signed with countries in other regions of the world, has been a paramount factor in reducing our poverty indexes, as well as in improving our technological and productive capacities. We are convinced that free trade is a powerful engine for growth and progress, both fundamental issues that lead to broaden and deepen democracy and its institutions.

I would also like to emphasize that regarding environmental and labor issues, we are closely working with the authorities of your country in projects oriented to improve the quality as well as to strengthen the enforcement of our laws

and regulations, in order to reach international standards. In my view, this is indispensable to successfully compete in an increasingly globalized economy.

As you know, many Latin American countries have new leaders, all of them democratically elected. However, an important number of their citizens live in conditions of extreme poverty, without access to health benefits and education, nor to an appropriate nutrition and dignified jobs. Many of the Latin American families are headed by women, who are subject to discrimination and do not possess the knowledge and the minimum skills to obtain a job which will allow them to pull their children out of the vicious circle of poverty and lack of opportunities.

For all the said reasons, I am certain that the respective approvals by the Congress of your country of the Free Trade Agreements between the United States and Peru, Panama, and Colombia, together with the extension of the recently approved tariff preferences for Bolivia and Ecuador, will benefit those countries as well as the rest of the American continent, whose common aspiration is to advance along the path of economic and social development in peace, freedom, and democracy. These approvals will also be beneficial for the relation existing between the United States and Latin America, since they will stimulate trade and exchanges, as well as the global economic and political relations.

Together with extending my most sincere greetings, I avail myself of this opportunity to reiterate to you the assurances of my highest and most distinguished consideration.

Michelle Bachelet Jeria