

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For procedural questions concerning public comments, contact Gloria Blue, Executive Secretary, TPSC, Office of the USTR, 1724 F Street, NW., Washington, DC 20508, telephone (202) 395-3475. Questions concerning the environmental review, or requests for copies, should be addressed to Alice Mattice or David Brooks, Environment and Natural Resources Section, Office of the USTR, telephone 202-395-7320.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Trade Act of 2002, signed by the President on August 6, 2002, provides that the President shall conduct environmental reviews of [certain] trade agreements consistent with Executive Order 13121—*Environmental Review of Trade Agreements* (64 FR 63,169, Nov. 18, 1999) and its implementing guidelines (65 FR 79,442, Dec. 19, 2000) and report on such reviews to the Committee on Ways and Means of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Finance of the Senate. The Order and guidelines are available at <http://www.ustr.gov/environmental/environmental.shtml>.

The purpose of environmental reviews is to ensure that policymakers and the public are informed about reasonably foreseeable environmental impacts of trade agreements (both positive and negative), to identify complementarities between trade and environmental objectives, and to help shape appropriate responses if environmental impacts are identified. Reviews are intended to be one tool, among others, for integrating environmental information and analysis into the fluid, dynamic process of trade negotiations. USTR and the Council on Environmental Quality jointly oversee implementation of the Order and Guidelines. USTR, through the Trade Policy Staff Committee (TPSC), is responsible for conducting the individual reviews.

Written Comments

In order to facilitate prompt processing of submissions of comments, the Office of the United States Trade Representative strongly urges and prefers e-mail submissions in response to this notice. Persons submitting comments by e-mail should use the following e-mail address: FR0097@ustr.gov with the subject line: "CAFTA Interim Environmental Review." Documents should be submitted as either WordPerfect, MSWord, or text (.TXT) files. Persons who make submissions by e-mail should not provide separate cover letters; information that might appear in a cover

letter should be included in the submission itself. To the extent possible, any attachments to the submission should be included in the same file as the submission itself, and not as separate files. If submission by e-mail is impossible, comments should be made by facsimile to (202) 395-6143, attention: Gloria Blue.

Written comments will be placed in a file open to public inspection in the USTR Reading Room at 1724 F Street, NW., Washington DC. An appointment to review the file may be made by calling (202) 395-6186. The Reading Room is open to the public from 10-12 a.m. and from 1-4 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Carmen Suro-Bredie,

Chair, Trade Policy Staff Committee.

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OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES TRADE REPRESENTATIVE

Request for Comments and Notice of Public Hearing Concerning Proposed United States-Dominican Republic Free Trade Negotiations

AGENCY: Office of the United States Trade Representative.

ACTION: Notice of intent to initiate free trade negotiations between the United States and the Dominican Republic, request for comments, and notice of public hearing.

SUMMARY: The United States intends to initiate free trade negotiations with the Dominican Republic. The interagency Trade Policy Staff Committee (TPSC) will convene a public hearing and seek public comment to provide the United States Trade Representative (USTR) advice on how specific goods and services and other matters should be treated under an agreement resulting from the proposed negotiations.

DATES: Persons wishing to testify orally at the hearing must provide written notification of their intention, as well as their testimony, by October 1, 2003. A hearing will be held in Washington, DC beginning on October 8, 2003, and will continue as necessary on subsequent days. Written comments are due by noon, November 2, 2003.

ADDRESSES: Submissions by electronic mail: FR0089@ustr.gov (notice of intent to testify and written testimony); FR0090@ustr.gov (written comments). Submissions by facsimile: Gloria Blue, Executive Secretary, Trade Policy Staff Committee, at (202) 395-6143. The public is strongly encouraged to submit

documents electronically rather than by facsimile. (See requirements for submissions below.)

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For procedural questions concerning written comments or participation in the public hearing, contact Gloria Blue, Executive Secretary, Trade Policy Staff Committee, at (202) 395-3475. All other questions should be directed to Andrea Gash Durkin, Director for Central America and the Caribbean, (202) 395-6135.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

1. Background

Under section 2104 of the Trade Act of 2002 (Trade Act) (19 U.S.C. 3804), for agreements that will be approved and implemented through trade promotion authority (TPA) procedures, the President must provide the Congress with at least 90 days written notice of his intent to enter into negotiations and must identify the specific objectives for the negotiations. Before and after the submission of this notice, the President must consult with appropriate Congressional committees and the Congressional Oversight Group regarding the negotiations.

Under section 131 of the Trade Act of 1974, as amended (19 U.S.C. 2151), the President must seek the advice of the U.S. International Trade Commission (ITC) regarding the probable economic effects on U.S. industries and consumers of the removal of tariffs and non-tariff barriers on imports pursuant to any proposed agreement. In addition, pursuant to section 133, the President must afford interested persons an opportunity to present their views regarding any matter relevant to any proposed agreement.

On August 4, 2003, after consulting with relevant Congressional committees and the Congressional Oversight Group, the USTR notified the Congress that the President intends to initiate free trade agreement negotiations with the Dominican Republic and identified specific objectives for the negotiations. Through these negotiations, we expect to provide for essentially the same disciplines as those in the Free Trade Agreement we are currently negotiating with the five member countries of the Central American Economic Integration System (Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua) (CAFTA), and to negotiate specific market access commitments with the Dominican Republic. On August 6, 2003, the USTR requested the ITC to provide advice on probable economic effects. The ITC intends to provide this advice within four months of its receipt of the request. This notice solicits views

from the public on these negotiations and provides information on a hearing that will be conducted pursuant to the requirements of the Trade Act of 1974.

2. Public Comments and Testimony

To assist the Administration in pursuing these negotiations, the Chairman of the TPSC invites written comments and/or oral testimony of interested persons at a public hearing. Comments and testimony may address the reduction or elimination of tariffs or non-tariff barriers on any articles provided for in the Harmonized Tariff Schedule of the United States (HTSUS) that are products of the Dominican Republic, any concession which should be sought by the United States, or any other matter relevant to the proposed agreement.

The TPSC invites comments and testimony on all of these matters and, in particular, seeks comments and testimony addressed to:

(a) General and commodity-specific negotiating objectives for the proposed agreement.

(b) Economic costs and benefits to U.S. producers and consumers of removal of tariffs and non-tariff barriers to U.S.-Dominican Republic trade.

(c) Treatment of specific goods (described by Harmonized System tariff numbers) under the proposed agreement, including comments on

(1) Product-specific import or export interests or barriers,

(2) Experience with particular measures that should be addressed in the negotiations, and

(3) In the case of articles for which immediate elimination of tariffs is not appropriate, a recommended staging schedule for such elimination.

(d) Adequacy of existing customs measures to ensure Dominican Republic origin of imported goods, and appropriate rules of origin for goods entering the United States under the proposed agreement.

(e) Existing Dominican Republic sanitary and phytosanitary measures and technical barriers to trade.

(f) Existing barriers to trade in services between the United States and the Dominican Republic that should be addressed in the negotiations.

(g) Investment issues that should be addressed in the negotiations.

(h) Government procurement issues that should be addressed in the negotiations and other relevant issues.

Comments may address issues such as trade-related intellectual property rights, labor, and environment, noting that we expect to provide for essentially the same disciplines for the Dominican Republic that are negotiated with

CAFTA. Comments identifying present or potential trade barriers, laws or regulations that are not primarily trade-related should address the economic, political and social objectives of such regulations and the degree to which they discriminate against U.S. producers. At a later date, the USTR, through the TPSC, will publish notice of the U.S. environmental and employment impact reviews.

A hearing will be held on October 8, 2003, in Rooms 1 and 2, 1724 F Street, NW., Washington, DC. If necessary, the hearing will continue on subsequent days. Persons wishing to testify at the hearing must provide written notification of their intention by October 1, 2003. The notification should include: (1) The name, address, and telephone number of the person presenting the testimony; and (2) a short (one or two paragraph) summary of the presentation, including the subject matter and, as applicable, the product(s) (with HTSUS numbers), service sector(s), or other subjects to be discussed. A copy of the testimony must accompany the notification. Remarks at the hearing should be limited to no more than five minutes to allow for possible questions from the TPSC. Persons with mobility impairments who will need special assistance in gaining access to the hearing should contact the TPSC Executive Secretary.

Interested persons, including persons who participate in the hearing, may submit written comments by noon, November 2, 2003. Written comments may include rebuttal points demonstrating errors of fact or analysis not pointed out in the hearing. All written comments must state clearly the position taken, describe with particularity the supporting rationale, and be in English. The first page of written comments must specify the subject matter, including, as applicable, the product(s) (with HTSUS numbers), service sector(s), or other subjects.

3. Requirements for Submissions

In order to facilitate prompt processing of submissions, the Office of the United States Trade Representative strongly urges and prefers electronic (e-mail) submissions in response to this notice. In the event that an e-mail submission is impossible, submissions should be made by facsimile. Persons making submissions by e-mail should use the following subject line: "United States—Dominican Republic Free Trade Negotiations" followed by (as appropriate) "Notice of Intent to Testify," "Testimony," or "Written Comments." Documents should be submitted as WordPerfect, MSWord, or

text (.TXT) files. Supporting documentation submitted as spreadsheets are acceptable as Quattro Pro or Excel. For any document containing business confidential information submitted electronically, the file name of the business confidential version should begin with the characters "BC-", and the file name of the public version should begin with the characters "P-". The "P-" or "BC-" should be followed by the name of the submitter.

Persons who make submissions by e-mail should not provide separate cover letters; information that might appear in a cover letter should be included in the submission itself. To the extent possible, any attachments to the submission should be included in the same file as the submission itself, and not as separate files.

Written comments, notice of testimony, and testimony will be placed in a file open to public inspection pursuant to 15 CFR 2003.5, except business confidential information exempt from public inspection in accordance with 15 CFR 2003.6. Business confidential information submitted in accordance with 15 CFR 2003.6 must be clearly marked "Business Confidential" at the top of each page, including any cover letter or cover page, and must be accompanied by a nonconfidential summary of the confidential information. All public documents and nonconfidential summaries shall be available for public inspection in the USTR Reading Room. The USTR Reading Room is open to the public, by appointment only, from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. and 1 p.m. to 4 p.m., Monday through Friday. An appointment to review the file must be scheduled at least 48 hours in advance and may be made by calling (202) 395-6186.

General information concerning the Office of the United States Trade Representative may be obtained by accessing its Internet Web site (<http://www.ustr.gov>).

Carmen Suro-Bredie,

Chairman, Trade Policy Staff Committee.

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

Research, Engineering and Development (R,E&D) Advisory Committee

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration.