

July 6, 2011

The Honorable Max Baucus  
Chairman  
Committee on Finance  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Dave Camp  
Chairman  
Committee on Ways and Means  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington D.C. 20515

The Honorable Orrin Hatch  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Finance  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Sander Levin  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Ways and Means  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington D.C. 20515

Dear Chairmen Baucus and Camp and Ranking Members Hatch and Levin:

The undersigned organizations urge you to support the implementing bills for the trade agreements with South Korea, Colombia, and Panama as the Senate Committee on Finance and House Committee on Ways and Means hold “mock” markup hearings. We applaud the work of your Committees for taking these next steps toward approval of these vital agreements, and we hope they will be considered and approved by the full House and Senate as expeditiously as possible.

These trade agreements would create tens of thousands of jobs for American workers and farmers — and benefit businesses both large and small — all across the nation. They would level the playing field for American exporters, thereby creating real business opportunities for U.S. businesses and their employees. For example, South Korea currently collects \$4 in tariffs on U.S. exports for every \$1 the United States collects in tariffs on South Korean exports. U.S. businesses confront similar or higher trade barriers in Colombia and Panama.

The agreements would sweep away most of these tariffs and other trade barriers immediately upon implementation. The accords will also open these countries’ services markets, protect the intellectual property of American innovators and creative artists, and remove non-tariff barriers that can stifle international commerce.

For far too long, the United States has sat on the sidelines while other nations have clinched their own trade deals with South Korea, Colombia, and Panama, threatening to put American workers and businesses large and small at a competitive disadvantage. On July 1, the European Union-Korea Free Trade Agreement entered into force, and the Canada-Colombia Free Trade Agreement will do so on August 15. U.S. farmers and ranchers, for example, have already lost more than \$1 billion in sales to Colombia due to delays in approval of the agreement with that country.

In addition, South Korea, Colombia, and Panama are among America’s most important allies on the world stage. These nations are robust democracies whose citizens share U.S. values and have long stood by us in strategic regions. Enhancing trade ties with these nations strengthens those alliances and advances the U.S. national interest beyond the creation of needed jobs and export sales.

Our organizations also support the Trade Adjustment Assistance program, and many of our organizations support the Generalized System of Preferences and the Andean Trade Preference Act as well.

To level the playing field for trade, create American jobs, and reaffirm U.S. leadership, the undersigned organizations urge the swift approval of the three agreements and resolution of the differences over Trade Adjustment Assistance by both the House and Senate.

Sincerely,

Aerospace Industries Association  
American Apparel & Footwear Association  
American Automotive Policy Council  
American Farm Bureau Federation  
American Soybean Association  
Association of American Chambers of Commerce in Latin America  
Association of Equipment Manufacturers  
Business Software Alliance  
Coalition of Service Industries  
Computer & Communications Industry Association  
Footwear Distributors & Retailers of America  
Emergency Committee for American Trade  
The Financial Services Roundtable  
Grocery Manufacturers Association  
International Intellectual Property Alliance  
Motion Picture Association of America  
National Association of Manufacturers  
National Association of Wheat Growers  
National Barley Growers Association  
National Corn Growers Association  
National Fisheries Institute  
National Foreign Trade Council  
National Oilseed Processors Association  
Outdoor Industry Association  
Recording Industry Association of America  
Retail Industry Leaders Association  
Securities Industry and Financial Markets Association  
SPI: The Plastics Industry Trade Association  
TechNet  
Travel Goods Association  
USA Dry Pea & Lentil Council  
U.S. Canola Association  
U.S. Chamber of Commerce  
U.S. Council for International Business

cc: The Members of the Senate Committee on Finance  
The Members of the House Committee on Ways and Means