

Sample Letters to the Editor – Remember, Personalizing and Localizing is best!

Elections (170 words)

The midterm elections revealed more than the simple fact that Americans were tired of Republican leadership. A majority of voters in the election believe that life for their children will be “worse” than it is for them. A large part of the reason for this concern are our current ruinous trade and globalization policies, which have led to large-scale job loss at home and have deepened poverty abroad.

Many of the candidates who won in November ran supporting an overhaul in our trade agenda to require stronger protections workers and the environment. According to several analyses, dozens of candidates running on fair trade platforms defeated anti-fair trade incumbents, and no anti-fair trade candidates defeated incumbents who endorsed fair trade policies.

Americans want to trade with the rest of the world, but we want that trade to lift everyone up, not push the middle class and working people down.

As the new Congress gets to work, they should keep this in mind if they want to keep their jobs in 2008.

Peru and Colombia (203 words)

President Bush recently signed free trade agreements with Colombia and Panama. These trade deals now join the Peru free trade agreement in waiting for a vote by the U.S. Congress. If passed, these agreements would expand the failed NAFTA agreement even further.

What is the president thinking? The U.S. has lost over 1 million jobs as a direct result of NAFTA, with more good jobs leaving every day! And its not as if NAFTA was good for Mexico – under NAFTA, the Mexican minimum wage lost 20 percent of its value and 1.3 million Mexican farmers lost their livelihoods as a result of an influx of cheap, subsidized corn imports.

If these NAFTA rules are expanded to Panama, Peru, and Colombia, then impoverished small farmers there will be forced to turn to drug production and paramilitary groups. We'll be exporting more jobs and importing more narcotics.

That's real bad policy. But its bad politics too! In the recent congressional elections, fair trade candidates whipped “free trade” incumbents around the country. Americans are fed up with unfair trade deals that export jobs – and we want change!

Representative XXX should oppose the president's move to expand NAFTA. “Stay the course” is not an option on trade.

Immigration (195 words)

While some politicians are focused on closing off the U.S.-Mexico border to try to stop the northward flow of immigrant workers, little attention is being paid to the roots of the economic crisis that have devastated communities in Latin America, forcing people to migrate in the first place.

In the last decade, the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) has eroded economic opportunities for decent manufacturing and farm work in Mexico – the opposite of what NAFTA promoters claimed would happen. As a result, the number of annual immigrants from Mexico to the United States surged from 332,000 in 1993 (the year before NAFTA went into effect) to 530,000 in 2000 – a 60 percent increase over the period. If lawmakers are really concerned with addressing the massive influx of immigrants, they should stop the expansion of NAFTA.

Now the Bush administration wants Congress to vote to approve new NAFTA expansion deals to Peru and Colombia. I urge Representative XXX to vote NO!

In the recent congressional elections, fair trade candidates whipped “free trade” incumbents around the country. Americans are fed up with unfair trade deals that export our jobs, but still cause more rural poverty abroad.