

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR AND CONGRESS OF INDUSTRIAL ORGANIZATIONS



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LEGISLATIVE ALERT!

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June 11, 2009

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the ten million working men and women of the AFL-CIO, I urge you to cosponsor the Trade Reform, Accountability, Development and Employment (TRADE) Act of 2009.

For years, so-called “free trade” agreements have been sold to the public on the promise that they will bring net benefits in more and better jobs and faster growth. While these agreements often succeed in increasing trade and investment flows, they generally do not create more trade-related jobs. Often, the jobs they do create are less stable, with reduced pay and fewer benefits, than the largely unionized manufacturing jobs that have been displaced. There are, of course, many reasons for stagnating wages and manufacturing job loss, but the corporate trade and investment liberalization policies embodied in our trade agreements are a significant contributor.

In this economic environment, it is all the more urgent that we develop a comprehensive, long-term plan for putting our economy on the right track—a plan that will be measured not on the profitability of U.S. multinational corporations operating abroad, but rather on the ability of U.S.-based producers to compete and thrive on American soil in a dynamic global economy. By this standard, our current trade policy needs deep reform. We need a trade policy that puts good jobs and domestic growth at the center of a meaningful global economic strategy.

The TRADE Act calls for a long overdue comprehensive review of U.S. trade policy. This bill will also outline a new U.S. trade strategy—one that puts a priority on the interests of working Americans, farmers, the environment, and domestic manufacturers, not just multinational corporations.

The AFL-CIO is proud to support the TRADE Act. It is past time to restructure U.S. trade policy to work for working families—here at home and around the world. Again, I urge you to cosponsor the TRADE Act.

Sincerely,

William Samuel, Director
GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT