November 20, 2006

The Honorable Susan C. Schwab  
United States Trade Representative  
Office of the U.S. Trade Representative  
600 17th Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20508  

Dear Madam Ambassador:

As a follow up to our letter of April 6 to Ambassador Portman, we are writing to convey in the strongest terms our concerns regarding the U.S.-Peru Trade Promotion Agreement (TPA). Specifically, we are dismayed that the Administration has consistently declined to take the simple steps necessary to address our key outstanding concern, which continues to be labor standards, and to remedy serious flaws in the TPA’s labor provisions. Our concerns apply to the Colombia agreement as well. Signing the agreement this week would mean that the main text of that agreement does not adequately meet these basic concerns and would send the wrong message about your willingness to work with us to address our concerns.

Peru’s labor laws still fail to meet International Labor Organization (ILO) standards. Changes made by the Government of Peru through legislative and regulatory actions taken in July of this year do not bring Peruvian law into conformity with ILO standards.

We have not changed our view, articulated in our earlier letter, that the most effective way to address the problems in Peru’s labor laws would be for the United States to accept then-President Toledo’s offer to include in the TPA enforceable provisions requiring compliance with ILO standards. As noted previously, these provisions would be subject to a reasonable transition period, and the agreement should provide substantial technical assistance for such compliance. In addition, we believe that such labor provisions should be subject to the same dispute resolution process applicable to other provisions of the TPA.

We encourage you to reconsider former President Toledo’s offer and adopt an approach that would both address our legitimate concerns and ensure broad, bipartisan support for this agreement in both the House and Senate.
Sincerely,

Jeff Bingaman
James M. Jeffords

Richard J. Durbin
Jay Rockefeller
Sincerely,

Charles B. Rangel
Sander M. Levin
Richard E. Neal
Lloyd Doggett
John B. Larson
Rahm Emanuel
Sherrod Brown

Benjamin L. Cardin
John Lewis
Xavier Becerra
Earl Pomeroy
Mike Thompson