



February 26, 2007

The Hon. Charles Rangel  
Chairman  
Committee on Ways & Means  
U.S. House of Representatives  
1102 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington D.C. 20515

The Hon. Max Baucus  
Chairman  
Committee on Finance  
U.S. Senate  
219 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510-6200

Re: Comments Concerning Support for Renewal of Trade Promotion Authority

Dear Chairman Rangel and Chairman Baucus:

On behalf of the Board of Directors of Consumers for World Trade (CWT), I am writing to express our support for long-term renewal of Trade Promotion Authority (TPA) as a necessary step to successfully complete the Doha Round of multilateral trade negotiations, and to move forward with various bilateral, regional, and multilateral trade liberalization agreements in the future. However, CWT also expresses its concern that renewal of TPA not be coupled with conditions that will be inconsistent with existing international trade obligations or undermine the benefits of trade liberalization agreements.

By way of background, CWT is a national, non-profit, non-partisan organization, established in 1978 to promote the consumer interest in international trade and to enhance the public's awareness of the benefits of an open, multilateral trading system to everyone's daily life. CWT is the only consumer group in America whose sole mission is to educate, advocate and mobilize consumers to support trade opening legislation.

As a consumer group, we strongly support the elimination of tariffs and non-tariff barriers to trade as a vehicle for providing Americans, particularly hard working American families, with a wide variety of competitively priced goods. It is our view that successful completion of multilateral, bilateral, and regional trade negotiations that reduce or eliminate tariffs and trade restrictions have the greatest potential to produce these gains. In fact, because of the disparate impact of high tariffs on inexpensive consumer goods, the neediest of Americans potentially stand to benefit the most from a successful Doha

Round, FTAs and other agreements. However, these gains cannot be realized without TPA renewal. For this reason, we urge you to consider long-term renewal legislation, so that the current and future Administrations do not have to return repeatedly to Congress before they can engage U.S. trading partners in negotiations on new agreements.

We remain concerned that renewal legislation may include labor and environmental protection provisions that could dilute these potential gains. Establishing basic labor rights and protecting the environment in nations with which we trade, especially developing economies, are certainly laudable goals. We hope that you also recognize the enormous potential to improve the lives of workers and consumers in many developing economies through open and free trade achieved by concluding the Doha Round, FTAs and regional agreements. Labor and environmental goals should not serve to undermine, but to strengthen the enormous gains to be achieved from open trade in the developing world. For this reason, we urge you to assure that TPA renewal legislation does not contain labor or environmental provisions that are inconsistent with existing international trade rules, fail to respect principles of national sovereignty, or would undermine the ability to achieve meaningful trade liberalization and its accompanying benefits.

In addition, CWT opposes any coupling of TPA renewal with amendments to U.S. trade remedy laws. For example, CWT believes that reported proposals to amend Section 301 to allow for unilateral action in the absence of a World Trade Organization dispute settlement ruling in favor of a U.S. position would create a high potential for retaliation by our trading partners. Such a change would undermine consistent U.S. efforts to establish and maintain a fair, rules-based trading global system.

We thank you for providing us with the opportunity to provide you with our comments on this proposal. CWT looks forward to the opportunity to work with you and your staffs on TPA renewal.

Yours truly,

Robin Lanier  
Executive Director  
Consumers for World Trade

CC: Ways and Means Committee Members  
Finance Committee Members