

August 11, 2005

The Hon. Rob Portman  
United States Trade Representative  
600 17<sup>th</sup> Street, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20508

Dear Ambassador Portman,

On behalf of the Board of Directors of Consumers for World Trade (CWT), I urge you to repeal without further delay the current duties on imports of Canadian softwood lumber. Yesterday's ruling by the NAFTA Extraordinary Challenge Committee is a mandate to both comply with U.S. law and respect our commitment to the treaty we made with Canada. To do anything else would nullify both, an outcome the U.S. cannot afford.

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. CWT accomplishes these goals through email campaigns, advocacy on the Hill, monthly events that highlight the consumer impact of current trade policies, and an e-newsletter that we distribute to consumers around the country.

Your response to the ECC ruling that the U.S. would **not** discontinue duties suggests that the United States should ignore its international obligations. Therefore, Ambassador Portman, we urge you and President Bush to do the right thing. The United States has a responsibility to respect the treaties it signs and follow U.S. law. The current "beggar thy neighbor" strategy towards Canada is unseemly and not fitting for a world power. All participants in the world trading system – whether they be importers, exporters, producers, or consumers – are equally important and should be treated with equal respect.

Yours truly,

Pamela J. Slater  
Executive Director  
Consumers for World Trade