

February 8, 2011

The Hon. Dave Camp
Chairman,
House Ways and Means Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Hon. Sander Levin
Ranking Member,
House Ways and Means Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman and Rep. Levin,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit a statement for the record of the hearing on trade policy scheduled to take place before the House Ways and Means Committee tomorrow. I write on behalf of American Jewish Committee (AJC), the nation's global Jewish advocacy organization, to urge early Congressional consideration and approval of the three trade agreements—with South Korea, Colombia and Panama—signed by the United States in 2007.

AJC has consistently called on successive U.S. administrations to increase its cooperative efforts with Latin America and Asia. We believe that the promotion of trade agreements and innovative policies that advance economic development and integration around the world is crucial not only to addressing unequal distribution of wealth, but also to creating thousands of new jobs at home. In addition to opening channels of engagement and fostering political and strategic alliances, enhanced trade between the U.S. and these countries is an important tool in promoting U.S. foreign policy priorities. The special interests of specific companies or regions, which are invariably implicated in a trade arrangement, must not be allowed to hurt our nation's overall interests.

South Korea, Colombia and Panama have been reliable and loyal allies of the United States. Congressional action on the pending agreements would represent a well-deserved gesture of appreciation for their steadfast friendship. In addition, such approval would well serve our nation's strategic and economic interests, increasing U.S. exports by billions of dollars and creating many thousands of U.S. jobs.

On behalf of AJC's more than 175,000 members and supporters, we thank you for considering our views on this important matter.

Respectfully,



Richard T. Foltin
Director of National and Legislative Affairs