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## **BAUCUS LEADS FINANCE COMMITTEE TO PASS COLOMBIA, PANAMA, SOUTH KOREA FTAS**

*Finance Chairman Hails Passage of Agreements That Will Create Tens of Thousands of U.S. Jobs, Boost U.S. GDP by \$15 Billion;  
Committee Approves Trade Nominees*

**Washington, DC** – Senate Finance Committee Chairman Max Baucus (D-Mont.) today led the Committee to favorably report implementing legislation for the Colombia, Panama and South Korea Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) and an extension of the Andean Trade Preference Act (ATPA). The trade agreements will increase U.S. exports by \$13 billion each year and boost U.S. Gross Domestic Product by more than \$15 billion.

**“These free trade agreements are about jobs. In these tough economic times, these trade agreements are exactly what our economy needs to spur job creation. They will help U.S. workers, farmers, ranchers and businesses gain new customers for their world-class products in lucrative and fast-growing markets,”** said Baucus. **“The trade agreements passed today will create tens of thousands of jobs here at home and provide a much-needed boost of billions of dollars to our economy.”**

The Colombia FTA implementing legislation extends ATPA retroactively from February 12, 2011 and through July 31, 2013. ATPA lowers costs for U.S. manufacturers by giving them duty-free access to goods from Colombia and Ecuador and encourages both countries to diversify their economies away from illicit drug production. Baucus is a longtime champion of the FTAs and ATPA and has been fighting for months to enact them in tandem with a renewal of Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA), which helps American workers retrain and find good-paying jobs here at home. The FTAs will provide a multi-billion dollar boost to the U.S. economy and create tens of thousands of American jobs by breaking down barriers to trade and putting U.S. exporters on a level playing field in lucrative, fast-growing markets. Baucus led the Senate [last month](#) in passing a bill extending both TAA and the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP), which lowers costs for U.S. manufacturers and retailers by giving them duty-free access to components they need.

Baucus has emphasized the importance of enacting the FTAs along with TAA at separate committee hearings on each of the [Colombia](#), [Panama](#) and [South Korea](#) free trade agreements, as well as at the [Committee’s July mock markup](#) of the TAA extension and draft implementing legislation for the FTAs. Committee mock markups are the standard way Congress weighs in on the legislation to implement FTAs negotiated under fast-track authority, which prohibits amendments to the final implementing bills. Earlier this year, Baucus also traveled to Colombia and [met with Colombian leaders](#)

to advance the pending U.S.-Colombia FTA and identify ways to [boost U.S. exports](#) to Colombia. A detailed fact sheet about the FTAs is attached.

The Committee also approved today the nominations of Michael Punke to be a Deputy United States Trade Representative; Islam A. Siddiqui to be Chief Agricultural Negotiator in the Office of the United States Trade Representative (USTR); Paul Piquado to be an Assistant Secretary of Commerce; and David S. Johanson to be a Member of the United States International Trade Commission.

**“These nominees are highly qualified and committed and they will help advance the job-creating trade agenda we’re working today to enact,”** said Baucus. **“Michael Punke, a proud Montanan, will work as Ambassador to the WTO and Deputy United States Trade Representative to give American ranchers, farmers and businesses new opportunities to export overseas and create jobs here at home. Islam Siddiqui will help break down barriers that unfairly block high-quality U.S. goods as Chief Agricultural Negotiator in the office of the United States Trade Representative. Paul Piquado will defend American jobs and commerce against unfair trade violations as Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Import Administration. David Johanson will play an important role informing Congress and enforcing intellectual property rights at the U.S. International Trade Commission.”**

Michael Punke, a Missoula, Montana resident and former University of Montana adjunct professor, has worked in the international trade field for two decades, including as Senior Policy Advisor to the USTR from 1995 to 1996. He was Director for International Economic Affairs in the Clinton Administration from 1993 to 1995, and he served on both the National Security Council and National Economic Council. Punke is a graduate of The George Washington University and Cornell Law School. He has served as Deputy United States Trade Representative since his recess appointment in 2010. Once confirmed, Punke will continue his work opening critical markets to U.S. exports by guiding the United States in the ongoing Doha negotiations.

Islam Siddiqui served in the Agriculture Department during the Clinton Administration as a Senior Trade Advisor and as Under Secretary for Marketing and Regulatory Programs, where he worked alongside USTR in agricultural trade negotiations. More recently, he was the Vice President for Science and Regulatory Affairs at CropLife America. He has served as USTR’s Chief Agricultural Negotiator since his recess appointment in 2010. Once confirmed, Siddiqui will work to advance the interests of American farmers and ranchers in the global marketplace. Siddiqui is a graduate of Uttar Pradesh Agricultural University in Pantnagar, India, and holds both a Masters and Doctorate from the University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana.

Paul Piquado is currently the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Antidumping and Countervailing Duty Policy and Negotiations in the Import Administration at the Commerce Department, a position he has held since early 2010. For five years prior, Piquado was the Executive Director of the Pennsylvania Office of Trade Policy, advising Governor Ed Rendell on trade matters. He also served, during that time, as an advisor to USTR’s Intergovernmental Policy Advisory Committee on Trade. Piquado earned a Bachelor’s degree from Williams College, a Master of Arts in Law and Diplomacy from the Tufts University Fletcher School of Law & Diplomacy and a law degree from New York University. As Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Import Administration, Piquado will develop policies that help counter unfair foreign trade practices that have a negative effect on American interests.

David Johanson has been a member of the minority trade staff of the Senate Finance Committee since 2003. Johanson previously worked for Congressmen George Radanovich and Wally Herger and Senator

Phil Gramm. He attended Stanford University, earned a Master's degree from Cambridge University and a law degree from the University of Texas. The USITC informs Congress and the Executive Branch on trade matters, investigates the effects of trade policies on American industries and adjudicates trade-related cases involving imports and intellectual property rights.

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