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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6200

June 30, 2011

RUSSELL SULLIVAN, STAFF DIRECTOR
CHRIS CAMPBELL, REPUBLICAN STAFF DIRECTOR

President Barack Obama
The White House
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President,

As you know, the U.S. Senate Finance Committee exercises jurisdiction over international trade, including jurisdiction over legislation implementing reciprocal trade agreements and authorizing legislation for trade adjustment assistance programs. This authority is rooted in Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution which grants Congress the power to "regulate commerce with foreign nations ..." and to "... lay and collect taxes, duties, imposts, and excises...." As elected representatives to the U.S. Senate and as members of the Finance Committee, we feel it is our constitutional duty to carefully consider and debate legislation under the Finance Committee's jurisdiction.

Under Trade Promotion Authority (TPA) procedures, legislation to implement trade agreements cannot be amended once it is submitted to Congress by the President. For this reason, it is imperative that Congress be closely consulted throughout the trade agreement negotiation process and during development of implementing legislation for each trade agreement.

We are concerned about last minute attempts to include provisions expanding Trade Adjustment Assistance in the South Korea FTA implementing bill. We believe such actions are beyond the scope of TPA authority and unduly infringe on the rights of Members of the Senate to carefully weigh and debate the merits of TAA.

While we may share different views regarding our support for these agreements and on trade adjustment assistance, we are united in our opposition to inclusion of expanded Trade Adjustment Assistance in this implementing bill submitted to Congress under Trade Promotion Authority. We believe each trade agreement and Trade Adjustment Assistance should be debated and considered in the Senate on its own merits.

Sincerely,



Jonny

Pat

Mike Crogo

Olympic Snow

John Corry

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