



**EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20503**

October 11, 2011
(House)

STATEMENT OF ADMINISTRATION POLICY
H.R. 3078 – United States-Colombia Trade Promotion Agreement Implementation Act
(Reps. Cantor, R-Virginia, and Farr, D-California)

The Administration strongly supports H.R. 3078, which approves and implements the United States-Colombia Trade Promotion Agreement, signed by the United States and Colombia on November 22, 2006, and amended through a protocol on June 28, 2007.

The Agreement advances U.S. national economic interests and meets the negotiating principles and objectives set out by Congress in the Trade Act of 2002. Under the Agreement, over 80 percent of U.S. industrial and consumer goods exports (not including petroleum) will gain duty-free access to the Colombian market immediately upon implementation. This will help to level the playing field, since 91 percent of our imports from Colombia have enjoyed duty-free access to our market. U.S. agricultural exports in particular will enjoy substantial new improvements in access to Colombia's market. Currently, no U.S. agricultural exports enjoy duty free access to Colombia. Once the Agreement enters into force, almost 70 percent, by value, of current U.S. agricultural exports will be able to enter Colombia duty-free immediately.

The Agreement contains state of the art provisions to help protect and enforce intellectual property rights, reduce regulatory red tape, and eliminate regulatory barriers to U.S. exports. The Agreement also contains high standards for protecting labor rights, carrying out covered environmental agreements, and ensuring that key domestic labor and environmental laws are enforced, combined with strong remedies for non-compliance. Colombia has already made significant reforms related to the obligations it will have under the labor chapter, including measures taken under the Colombian Action Plan Related to Labor Rights. The Administration will ensure that Colombia has successfully implemented key elements of the Action Plan before the Administration will bring the Agreement into force.

The Agreement forms an integral part of the Administration's larger strategy of doubling exports by the end of 2014. In addition, the Agreement represents an historic development in our relations with Colombia, a steadfast strategic partner for the United States and a leader in the region. The Agreement reflects the commitment of the United States to supporting democracy and economic growth in Colombia. The Agreement will also help Colombia battle production of illegal crops by creating alternative economic opportunities.

The bill also extends the Andean Trade Preference Act (ATPA), which helps countries in their fight against drug production and trafficking by expanding their economic alternatives. Extension of this program will restore, until the entry into force of the Agreement, the access that Colombian goods had enjoyed under ATPA prior to its expiration in February 2011.

* * * * *