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Kaptur Introduces NAFTA Accountability Act

Bill Would Correct Flawed U.S. Trade Policy

WASHINGTON, D.C.—U.S. Representative Marcy Kaptur (D-OH) introduced the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) Accountability Act, H.R. 4329. The legislation requires the United States to renegotiate NAFTA. If the negotiations do not produce specific, concrete improvements, it calls for America to withdraw from the agreement.

“For nearly fourteen years, NAFTA has reneged on its promises, bringing even more poverty and job loss to communities across the continent,” Kaptur said. “I join my colleagues from Maine to California in demanding a new, equitable model for free trade among free peoples.”

Nancy Boyda (D-KS), a leading cosponsor, added, “NAFTA is dragging down our economy, weakening our borders, and devastating our manufacturers. After fourteen years, it's time to either fix NAFTA or get the heck out of it.”

“Since its enactment, NAFTA has failed to deliver the economic success that it initially promised,” said Duncan Hunter (R-CA). “Our growing trade deficits with Mexico and Canada, and the continued loss of American jobs provide enough evidence to indicate that NAFTA just isn't working. It is time that we accept this reality and begin renegotiating this trade agreement to better and more fairly serve America's interests.”

The bill notes that the U.S. has accumulated a staggering trade deficit with Mexico and Canada since the agreement's implementation, the detrimental environmental consequences, the increase in vehicle, drug, and labor traffic across borders, as well as the dramatic loss of decent jobs and living wages across North America.

The bill would require the Executive Branch to certify that certain benchmarks, many that had been initially promised by proponents of the agreement, have been met by the three countries, or the President would be required to withdraw from NAFTA. These benchmarks include gains in U.S. jobs and living standards, increased U.S. domestic manufacturing, stronger health and environmental standards, especially with respect to food imports, decreased flow of illegal drugs from Mexico and Canada, and the guarantee of Mexican democracy and human freedoms.

The bill is co-sponsored by Representatives Boyda, Hunter, Phil Hare (D-IL), Dennis Kucinich (D-OH), Mike Michaud (D-ME), Tim Ryan (D-OH), Betty Sutton (D-OH), and Raúl Grijalva (D-AZ).