

The Colombia Free Trade Agreement: Advancing Profits Over People

The Bush administration and corporate lobbyists are pushing Congress to pass the Colombia Free Trade Agreement—the biggest pact of its kind in the Western Hemisphere since NAFTA. We need to stop them!

Six Good Reasons to Oppose the Colombia FTA

Weakened Food Safety: U.S. Food & Drug Administration data shows that Americans are three times more likely to be exposed to dangerous pesticide residues on imported foods than domestic foods. The Colombia FTA does not require imported food to meet the same high production standards as those in the United States, and actually opens the door to safety regulations being challenged as “barriers to trade.”

Human Rights Violations: Trade cannot be “free” when workers are denied their basic freedom of speech and assembly. Since 1991, 2,283 labor advocates have been assassinated in Colombia, and the rate of impunity for the murder of trade unionists remains over 97 percent. The International Labor Organization (ILO) has found that several of Colombia’s labor laws violate international standards, and that the country routinely fails to enforce the positive labor laws it has on the books.

Environmental Degradation: Like past trade agreements, the Colombia FTA makes it easier for transnational corporations to conduct dirty “rip and ship” resource extraction in some of the planet’s most biodiverse rainforests. The Colombia FTA also gives foreign corporations the right to challenge U.S. environmental protections as “barriers to trade.”

Continued Job Loss: Oregon has lost an estimated 68,000 jobs due NAFTA and similar trade policies. Expanding this model of trade to Colombia will make it easier for U.S. corporations to shift jobs to abroad to take advantage of weaker labor and environmental standards.

Threats to U.S. Sovereignty: The Colombia FTA allows foreign corporations to challenge food safety regulations, responsible land use decisions, environmental safety initiatives and other public health

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policies as “barriers to trade” through closed trade tribunals that circumvent the U.S. judicial system. Under NAFTA alone, more than 40 complaints, seeking \$28 billion in damages, have already been filed against existing public policies.

Increased Poverty Abroad: Like NAFTA and CAFTA before it, the Colombia FTA is expected to increase rural poverty by forcing small Colombian farmers out of business with subsidized food imports from U.S. agribusiness. The Colombian Ministry of Agriculture warns that this will lead to an increase in coca production, drug trafficking and illegally armed groups. The loss of farming jobs in Colombia will also undoubtedly push many families into the migration flow.

Tell Congress to take a stand against the Colombia FTA!

TAKE ACTION:

It's not too late to stop the Bush administration's mission of expanding NAFTA to Colombia—but only if we can get our Members of Congress to take a stand! Please call your Members of Congress and urge them to publicly oppose the Colombia Free Trade Agreement and the Bush administration's entire trade agenda.

In Oregon, call:

Rep. Wu: 503-326-2901
Rep. Walden: 541-776-4646
Rep. Blumenauer: 503-231-2300
Rep. DeFazio: 541-465-6732
Rep. Hooley: 503-588-9100
Sen. Wyden: 503-326-7525
Sen. Smith: 503-326-3386

LIVE OUTSIDE OREGON?

**Call the Congressional Switchboard at 202-224-3121
and ask to be transferred to your Member of Congress**

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