

California Fair Trade Coalition
For Immediate Release: June 4, 2008
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CFTC Praises California Representatives Lynn Woolsey, Hilda Solis, Linda Sanchez and Bob Filner for co-sponsoring Land Mark Trade Legislation

California-- The California Fair Trade Coalition (CFTC) is proud to join California Representatives Woolsey, Solis, Sanchez, and Filner, in support of the Trade Reform, Accountability, Development and Employment (TRADE) Act, which was introduced by Sen. Sherrod Brown (D-Ohio) and Rep. Mike Michaud (D-Maine) today in Washington D.C.

The act triggers a review of all existing trade agreements, and provides a process to renegotiate them. The bill also outlines principles of what should be included in future trade agreements, and expresses the sense of the Congress that their role in trade policymaking should be strengthened.

“The TRADE Act serves as a vehicle to reform our currently flawed trade policy that just doesn’t work,” Said Imelda Abarca, Director of the California Fair Trade Coalition. “The CFTC commends California Representatives Woolsey, Solis, Sanchez, and Filner, for co-sponsoring this important initiative which will help to insure that the rights of American workers, farmers, and the environment are protected from unfair trade policies in the future.”

The TRADE Act was introduced following a presidential primary season that saw trade policy rise to the top of American’s concerns. With several Democratic candidates promising to renegotiate existing agreements (visit <http://www.citizenstrade.org/positions.php> for those commitments), the TRADE Act provides a blueprint for how to best remedy many of these past problems in trade agreements.

"The TRADE Act would make sure that the benefits of trade go to workers as well as the richest few," Said Teamsters General President James Hoffa. "It sets new rules for global trade that create good jobs and improve working conditions everywhere."

"The TRADE Act restores Congress's constitutional right of oversight in trade policy. The Bush Administration has trampled on that right. The landmark legislation that is being introduced today will ensure that no matter who occupies the Oval Office,

Congress will have a meaningful say in trade policy. “ Said Larry Cohen, President of the Communication Workers of America.

The current U.S. trade model has had devastating impacts. Since 1975, when Fast Track was first enacted, the trade deficit has gone from a slight surplus to an unsustainable \$709 billion deficit in 2007. A net 4.7 million manufacturing jobs have been lost. American worker productivity doubled but median wages are only 1 percent above 1970s levels

“This bill breaks new ground on the enforcement of labor rights, environmental protection, food and product safety, procurement, safeguards against surges of imports, trade remedies against unfair trade practices and the ability for countries to regulate foreign investment," said Bruce Raynor, President of UNITE HERE.

The TRADE Act articulates specific changes needed to the failed North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA)/World Trade Organization (WTO) model to ensure trade deals achieve good jobs, safe food and the promotion of basic human rights, healthy communities and environmental protection.

The California Fair Trade Coalition invites all California Representatives to show their support for the TRADE Act by co-sponsoring this Land Mark piece of legislation, and welcomes the opportunity to work together to promote responsible trade.

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