

## Tell Congress to Hold the Line on the U.S.-Colombia Trade Deal!

[http://www.teamsterstakeaction.org/campaign/colombia\\_trade\\_deal](http://www.teamsterstakeaction.org/campaign/colombia_trade_deal)

The Bush administration still does not understand that workers do not want any more job killing trade agreements. Congress is back in session for a month and the Chamber of Commerce, the White House, and the Colombian government are once again aggressively pushing for passage of the Colombia Free Trade Agreement. Lawmakers are under intense pressure to pass the job-killing trade deals-from multinational corporations, the government of Colombia and the Bush administration.

Your help is urgently needed to defeat this bill once and for all.

Contact your legislators today and tell them to hold the line on the Colombia Free Trade Agreement.

Find out other ways you can help bring an end to unfair trade.

### Talking Points

- o The Teamsters adamantly oppose any deal to pass this agreement with Colombia.
- o More than 2,500 trade unionists have been killed in Colombia since 1986.
- o This year, 40 Colombian trade unionists were murdered--already more than the 38 murders in 2007.
- o More trade unionists were murdered in Colombia than in the rest of the world combined since President Uribe took office in 2002.
- o President Uribe's family member and close ally was arrested on April 22 for colluding with paramilitary death squads.
- o No one should lose a life fighting for the right to organize, and no government should be "rewarded" for allowing such actions against our brothers and sisters in Colombia.
- o The CAFTA trade deal made Guatemala more dangerous for labor leaders.
- o This trade deal is nothing but a series of giveaways to multinational corporations and incentives to outsource jobs that belong in the U.S.
- o It's about protecting corporate investors who want cheap labor and lax environmental rules.
- o NAFTA-style deals result in job loss, declining wages, trade deficits, environmental degradation, contaminated products, increased immigration and loss of family farms.
- o It is time to end these phony "free trade agreements" and begin to craft trade policies that increase jobs, exports and living standards.

Subject:

Dear [ Decision Maker ],

(Edit Letter Below)

I urge you to oppose the U.S.-Colombia Free Trade Agreement, which the Bush administration is trying to push for a vote. This is another job-killing trade agreement that will have damaging consequences both here and abroad.

While the labor chapter of the Colombia FTA is an improvement, the rest of it is modeled on the flawed North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and the Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA). NAFTA and CAFTA resulted in major job losses here, environmental degradation and the decimation of family farms in other countries, and increased immigration to the U.S. We can only expect the results of the Colombia FTA to be the same.

Furthermore, it is reprehensible that this agreement was even negotiated. Colombia is the most dangerous place in the world to be a trade union activist. According to the National Labor School, 2,238 trade unionists were assassinated in Colombia since 1991. This year, 40 trade unionists were killed--a total that already surpasses the 38 killed last year. Trade unionists and their families live in constant fear, which makes it virtually impossible for them to organize, bargain collectively, strike, or criticize their government. Worse, the Colombian government has done nothing to bring justice to these brutal killings.

This trade agreement is not "free." It comes at a huge cost for Americans and Colombians alike. For Americans, it means more losses in jobs and exports, lower living standards for middle-class families, and a weaker manufacturing base. For Colombians, it means more substandard wages, the destruction of their country's biodiversity, ruined livelihoods for family farmers, an increased pressure to emigrate, and no justice for the thousands of trade unionists already assassinated and those who continue to live in fear.

I ask you to make your opposition to the Colombia FTA heard today. Please let leadership know that this agreement should not be brought up for a vote. If it is, I urge you to vote NO. Americans cannot afford more of these unfair, unbalanced trade agreements. We should not be negotiating with a country that does not enforce international labor standards and dismisses assassinations of trade union activists.

Please oppose the Colombia FTA today!

Sincerely,  
[Your name]  
[Your address] Take Action on this Issue  
Send this message to:  
Your Congressperson  
Your Senators

More at:  
<http://unionreview.com/take-action:-tell-congress-hold-line-u.s.-colombia-trade-deal!>