

Protest Against Colombian Hearts Starting Soon

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I spent much of last Thursday and Friday reporting on the [Colombia is Passion campaign](#), which has inundated our city with colorful heart statues.

Some say they're promoting tourism, and the country's culture and identity. Others say they're a [manipulative push for the Colombian Free Trade agreement](#).

And those people are protesting—starting at 4:30, in front of Union Station.

This afternoon, I spoke to Bill Holland of [Public Citizen Global Trade Watch](#).

He said his group, as well as [Witness for Peace](#), [TransAfrica Forum](#), [International Labor Rights Forum](#), and the [Colombia Human Rights Committee](#), are participating in this afternoon's gathering.

His group began organizing the rally even before the campaign launched in D.C. last week. Holland can't recall exactly how he heard about Colombia is Passion, "but the minute that we did, we found it incredibly ironic that the country [that leads the world in murders of union leaders](#) is putting hearts up across the city," he says.

"We wanted to send a clear signal to the Obama administration and Congress that this Bush-negotiated free trade agreement with Columbia was widely opposed," says Holland.

So what's this protest really going to look like? According to Holland: "We're going to have dozens of people outside Union Station with all sorts of visuals to highlight this legacy of violence in Colombia, and to make clear how many people are opposed to any expansion of NAFTA to this country."

Holland expects a crowd of 65 to 70 people.