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416 Groups Tell Congress to Oppose Oman Free Trade Agreement

Fifty-seven national organizations and 359 State and local organizations today sent Congress a letter (attached) opposing the Oman Free Trade Agreement. The labor, religious, environmental, farm, AIDS, development, consumer and related groups urge Congress to reject the latest manifestation of the NAFTA model and adopt a new policy for engagement with the global economy.

The letter emphasizes the negative effects that twelve years of the NAFTA model have had on all countries involved and calls for a new U.S. trade policy, stating:

“[The NAFTA] model has been devastating to the U.S. industrial base, accelerating job loss and lowering living standards in the United States while exacerbating poverty and social disparities in the developing nations with which we trade....By opposing the U.S.-Oman Free Trade Agreement, Congress will send an important message to the American people and to the world: most Americans desire a new U.S. trade and globalization policy that will lift standards of living and promote connections between countries that foster goodwill, fairness, and prosperity for all.”

The groups, from all regions of the United States, also cite the lack of meaningful labor and environmental protections, the increased restrictions on access to necessary medicines by those suffering HIV/AIDS, and the increased rights of investors to attack governments acting in the public interest.

“It is clear that our nation’s current failed trade policy strikes a deep chord of dissent among the American people. Hopefully – especially in this election year – Congress will get the message,” said Citizens Trade Campaign executive director Larry Weiss. “We can do better and there is no excuse for Congress to keep passing trade deals that do so much damage.”