

# Citizens Trade Campaign

---

P.O. Box 77077 Washington, D.C. 20013 phone (202) 778-3320 fax (202) 293-5308

October 25, 2002

Dear Representative/Senator:

As you may know, the United States Trade Representative will meet soon in Quito, Ecuador, with trade ministers from 33 other nations in the Hemisphere for the next round of negotiations on the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA). During this meeting, the nine FTAA working groups who have been conducting negotiations will be submitting second draft FTAA texts aimed at consolidating countries' positions on key issues including investment, services, market access, dispute settlement, and agriculture.

Throughout the campaign to pass Trade Promotion Authority, repeated assurances were made by the Bush Administration and other Fast Track proponents regarding transparency in future negotiations. However, on the eve of this FTAA Ministerial, those assurances, as TPA opponents predicted, remain unfulfilled. We, the member organizations of the Citizens Trade Campaign, urge you to ensure that the USTR meet its obligations of transparency outlined in the *Principal Trade Negotiating Objectives* of the Trade Act of 2002. In particular, we urge you to obtain the release of the U.S. negotiating proposals on the FTAA before the completion of this Ministerial on October 2nd, and to strongly advocate for the release of the next draft composite negotiating text which will be the product of the Ministerial. Moreover, we ask that you insist that in contrast to the release in July 2001 of the first FTAA draft text, that the next release is not "scrubbed" and thus that textual commentary including identification of proposal sponsors is not deleted.

The U.S. Trade Representative's office recently has said that it expects to release the next draft negotiating text of the agreement at the end of the Ministerial. If the text referred to, however is the same format as the FTAA text released following the Quebec Ministerial in 2001, it would omit any identification of which proposals are sponsored by which countries. Without this information, it is impossible to sort through the competing bracketed proposals or to have an accurate sense of where the negotiations are heading, what proposals U.S. trade negotiators are putting forth, and what is being requested of the U.S. by other nations.

In a formal notification to Congress, earlier this month, U.S. Trade Representative Robert Zoellick stated: "The FTAA negotiations are being conducted in a transparent manner to ensure that businesses, the agricultural community, labor organizations, non-governmental organizations, state and local governments, and the public are kept informed and have ample opportunity to provide their views." USTR's refusal to release the U.S. negotiating proposals or to indicate which negotiating positions in the bracketed draft text they have put forth, proves the contrary.

In the same notification to Congress, U.S. Trade Representative Zoellick has said that he is seeking to eliminate "barriers to trade" in other FTAA countries' services markets and to establish special disciplines for regulatory procedures for telecommunications, financial services, and other sectors. If these requests are reciprocal, we could see increased deregulation of our essential public services, as well as FTAA rules which contradict new corporate accountability rules Congress recently has regulated in the Sarbanes-Oxley legislation through corporate accountability legislation. In addition to this, other sensitive issues now on the table include establishment of "FTAA visas," private investor lawsuits based on the controversial NAFTA investor-to-state model, and an array of agricultural and government procurement policies.

(over)

On the issue of U.S. trade remedy laws, a topic on which the USTR does not have a good record of respecting the will of Congress, Ambassador Zoellick explicitly has stopped short of committing to make no changes in U.S. antidumping and countervailing duty laws.

Due to the absence of transparency, we are unable to know exactly what the USTR is putting forward in each of these pivotal areas, and how those proposals compare with the demands and interests of other nations. We respectfully urge you to direct the USTR to release the full U.S. negotiating positions and to press for identification of ownership of proposals in the released negotiating text so that both Congress and the public are able to engage in a full and informed debate.

Sincerely,

**Friends of the Earth**

**Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy**

**Minnesota Fair Trade Coalition**

**National Family Farm Coalition**

**Public Citizen**

**United Methodist Church, General Board of Church and Society**

**Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees**

**United Steelworkers of America**