



CHARLIE CRIST
GOVERNOR

March 27, 2008

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
H-232 Capitol Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Harry Reid
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
S-221 Capitol Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable John Boehner
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
H-204 Capitol Building
Washington D.C. 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader
U.S. Senate
S-230 Capitol Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Leader Reid, Leader Boehner, and Leader McConnell:

On behalf of the State of Florida, I urge Congress to support the U.S.-Colombia Trade Promotion Agreement (Colombia TPA). As a state that plays a pivotal role in this fruitful partnership, Florida would benefit greatly from an enhanced trade relationship with Colombia.

Colombia is one of the United States' most important allies in the Western Hemisphere and this agreement will aid in expanding our cultural, social, and economic ties within the region. Most importantly, this agreement creates a fair and reciprocal trade relationship between the United States and Colombia. Currently, products from Colombia already enter the United States and Florida duty free, under the auspices of the Andean Trade Preferences Act. U.S. exporters, however, do not receive the same preferential trade policies in Colombia. The Colombia TPA will provide reciprocal benefits to companies throughout Florida to export to one of the most dynamic and expanding economies in the Western Hemisphere.

Florida already enjoys a substantial trade relationship with Colombia, our state's seventh largest global trading partner, with two-way trade valued at over \$4.8 billion in 2006. This represents an increase of more than 46 percent from the previous year. We expect that once the agreement has been implemented, the resulting trade benefits will boost Florida's exports to Colombia by \$161 million in the first year alone and support the creation of over 1,700 jobs throughout the state.

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Last November, Colombian President Alvaro Uribe and I had the opportunity to sit down and discuss the benefits of a strengthened trade relationship between our nations. We agree that increased economic interaction will help expand our economies and provide better, higher-paying jobs for our citizens.

Again, I urge your consideration and support of the Colombia TPA, which will strengthen our relationship with Colombia and help expand Florida's economy.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Charlie Crist". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "C".

Charlie Crist

CC: Florida Congressional Delegation