

What They're Saying:

"We're Sending A Very Bad Message To Our Partners Around The World"

International Viewpoint Affirms Importance Of The U.S.-Colombia Free Trade Agreement

"The Most Important Geopolitical Mistake The United States Could Do Today ... Is Not Ratifying That Treaty"

Colombian President Alvaro Uribe: "Every day that passes is an opportunity lost by citizens of both countries." (Nicole Gaouette, "Colombia Trade Pact On Hold," *Los Angeles Times*, 4/11/08)

- "I want this message to get to the U.S. Congress: I beg you to look at the current problems and the favorable evolution that Colombia has experienced." (Andrew O. Selsky, "Bush Praise Aside, Colombian Union Members Still Targeted By Right-Wing Death Squads," *The Associated Press*, 4/8/08)

Colombian Trade Minister Luis Guillermo Plata: "Not having a trade agreement is almost like having trade sanctions imposed in the sense that you've been downgraded, or are at least now one level below the other comparable economies in the continent." (Mark Drajem and Joshua Goodman, "Colombia's Plata Says Rejecting Trade Accord Same as Sanctions," *Bloomberg*, 4/11/08)

Mexican Ambassador Arturo Sarukhan: "The most important geopolitical mistake the United States could do today ... is not ratifying that treaty." (Pablo Bachelet, "Bush Sends Colombia Trade Deal To Congress," *The Miami Herald*, 4/8/08)

Corredores Asociados Research Director Marcela Giraldo: "Once again the free trade agreement is impacting local stocks, in particular exporters." (James Attwood, "Colombia's Fabricato Plunges After U.S. House Delays Trade Deal," *Bloomberg*, 4/10/08)

Colombian-American Chamber of Commerce of Miami President Ricardo Tribin: "The U.S. Congress is abandoning us in the middle of lions like Venezuela, Ecuador and Nicaragua." "Colombia is one of the only friends they have in Latin America and it is asking for their help, and their answer is a slap in the face." (Pablo Bachelet, "Free-Trade Deal All But Defeated," *The Miami Herald*, 4/11/08)

Economist Gianfranco Bertozzi: "This is going to be too hot a potato for Chavez to leave alone ... He will say the U.S. slammed the door shut on a close ally, more proof that it doesn't have Latin American interests at heart." (Joshua Goodman and Mark Drajem, "Pelosi-Led Rebuff Of Colombia Trade Accord Aiding Chavez," *Bloomberg*, 4/11/08)

Consumer Electronics Association Senior Director Sage Chandler: "Politician react to public opinion. And what we're seeing from our politicians is a reaction what they're hearing on the streets. ... Their phones are ringing off the hook when one person loses their job. They're picking up the phone. But if what if every time you made a sale, what if every time you exported something, you called your congressman and said thank you. I think the story would be a little bit different." (Amy Tsu, "Business Groups To Seek Way Forward For Passage Of Colombia FTA," *BNA*, 4/11/08)

Center for Equal Opportunity Chairman Linda Chavez: "A secure and economically viable Colombia helps us in many ways." "The U.S. faces unfriendly governments in several Latin American countries, most notably Venezuela under the dictator Hugo Chavez. We need all the friends we can get in the region – and rejecting the Colombia agreement will be a real slap in the face of a strong ally." (Linda Chavez, Op-Ed, "Democrats Trade Hypocrisy," *Town Hall*, 4/11/08)

"Approval Would Show That Washington Believes In Supporting An Ally Ready To Stand Up To Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez"

***El Tiempo* [Colombia]:** "The landmarks of international and trade policy are undermined and the country must to reevaluate the meaning of its commitment with the U.S." "Without bitterness or tantrums, it has to open the discussion on how to handle the relationship with Washington from this time forward. Beginning, among others, considering the extension of ATPDEA benefits until the FTA will be defined." (Editorial, "FTA In The Freezer," *El Tiempo* [Colombia], 4/10/08)

The New York Times: "Rejecting or putting on ice the trade agreement would reduce the United States' credibility and leverage in Colombia and beyond." "In a letter last year to Congressional Democrats, a group of Democratic heavyweights from the Clinton administration and previous Congresses wrote: 'Walking away from the Colombia trade agreement or postponing it until conditions are perfect would send an unambiguous signal to our friends and opponents alike that the United States is an unreliable partner without a vision for cooperation in our hemisphere.'" (Editorial, "Time For The Colombian Trade Pact," *The New York Times*, 4/11/08)

Las Vegas Review-Journal: "[S]hielding inefficient industries from competition only delays the inevitable – and undermining the ability of American firms to market and sell their products overseas represents a much more serious threat to U.S. job creation than opening our own borders to foreign goods." "And now we have the spectacle of Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-AFL-CIO, vowing to rewrite the House's own rules to avoid a vote on a proposed free-trade deal with Colombia." (Editorial, "Trade Talks," *Las Vegas Review-Journal*, 4/10/08)

San Francisco Chronicle: "It must be an awkward talk that Pelosi has with herself on free trade: She's from an export-heavy region with ports, open-door universities, worldwide businesses and a diverse population." "The treaty – and the warmer relations it brings – has overwhelming advantages. Approval would show that Washington believes in supporting an ally ready to stand up to Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez. Closer trade ties could cement gains made by Colombia's fragile democratic government." (Editorial, "Trade Pandering," *San Francisco Chronicle*, 4/11/08)

The National Review: "Diplomatically, the deal would strengthen our economic and security ties to a country that shares our interest in countering terrorism and authoritarianism in South America." "Colombian President Alvaro Uribe has courageously confronted Hugo Chavez and his thuggish allies in the region over their support for the narco-terrorists responsible for much of the violence in his country." (Editorial, "Free Choice," *The National Review*, 4/10/08)

The Charleston [SC] Post Courier: "The vote also sends the message that the United States is an unreliable partner." "The free trade agreement promises the Colombian people a dividend by increasing trade with the United States and encouraging U.S. investment. It would have capped the success that President Uribe has achieved in battling the FARC, which has earned him a popularity rating of 82 percent." (Editorial, "Politics Trumps Free Trade," *Charleston [SC] Post Courier*, 4/14/08)

"We're Sending A Very Bad Message To Our Partners Around The World"

House Minority Leader John Boehner (R-OH): "This is a precipitous step in the wrong direction." "We're sending a very bad message to our partners around the world – all in the name of election-year politics. I think that it's regrettable; it's despicable." (Carl Hulse, "House Votes to Put Off Trade Deal Bush Sought," *The New York Times*, 4/11/08)

➤ "This vote today is a vote to kill the Colombia free-trade agreement." (Jennifer Bendery, "House Approves Stopping The Clock On Colombia Free-Trade Deal," *Roll Call*, 4/10/08)

House Committee On Rules Ranking Member David Dreier (R-CA): "I find it shocking our Democratic friends would turn their back" on Colombia. (Nicole Gaouette "U.S.-Colombia Free Trade Agreement Put On Hold," *Los Angeles Times*, 4/11/ 2008)

Ways And Means Committee Ranking Member Rep. Jim McCrery (R-LA): "Even postponing Congressional consideration of this agreement does tremendous damage to America's competitiveness." "Colombia will buy tractors, mining equipment and fertilizer from Canada, France and Germany instead of Illinois, Georgia and Texas." (Carl Hulse, "House Votes to Put Off Trade Deal Bush Sought," *The New York Times*, 4/11/08)

Rep. Marsha Blackburn (R-TN): "By repudiating the Colombian government's progress toward free-market capitalism and democratic reform, the Democrat Leadership turns its back on democratic progress in Colombia and wraps its arms around Hugo Chavez, narco-terrorists and radical socialists committed to blocking House passage of the Colombia FTA." ("Political Notebook: Blackburn Pushes Free Trade Hard," *The Memphis [TN] Commercial Appeal*, 4/14/08)