



**April 6, 2011
For Immediate Release**

**Contact: Jason Brewer
(703) 600-2050**

RILA Praises Progress on U.S. Colombia Trade Pact

Deal moves trade agenda forward and strengthens U.S. competitiveness

Arlington, VA – The Retail Industry Leaders Association (RILA) applauded today’s announcement from the Obama Administration on plans to move forward on the long-pending free trade agreement with Colombia. This deal on the Colombia trade pact opens the door for Congressional action on the three pending agreements with Colombia, Panama and South Korea before the August district work period. RILA President Sandy Kennedy issued the following statement.

“Lowering trade barriers is vital to the American retail sector—an industry that employs more than 12.45 million U.S. workers. Retailers applaud the Obama administration for striking this deal and ensuring that U.S. job creators and American families have access to the considerable benefits of free trade. RILA encourages Congress and the Administration to act expeditiously to approve all three pending free trade agreements and to reaffirm bipartisan support for free trade.

“Domestic economic growth and job creation here at home are dependent upon open access to new markets and new sources in the global economy. Tearing down trade barriers will create thousands of new jobs as American businesses compete to buy and sell goods and services to customers around the world.”

RILA is the trade association of the world’s largest and most innovative retail companies. RILA members include more than 200 retailers, product manufacturers, and service suppliers, which together account for more than \$1.5 trillion in annual sales, millions of American jobs and more than 100,000 stores, manufacturing facilities and distribution centers domestically and abroad.

###