

Resolution No. 78

Submitted by:

The Honorable Manuel A. Diaz

Mayor of Miami

The Honorable Richard M. Daley

Mayor of Chicago

The Honorable Martin J. Chavez

Mayor of Albuquerque

The Honorable Juan Carlos Bermudez

Mayor of Doral

The Honorable Raul G. Salinas

Mayor of Laredo

SUPPORT FOR THE U.S.-COLOMBIA FREE TRADE AGREEMENT

1. **WHEREAS**, President George W. Bush transmitted implementing legislation to Congress for the United States-Colombia Free Trade Agreement on April 7, 2008; and

2. **WHEREAS**, Colombian goods currently enter the U.S. market with few tariffs while U.S. goods entering Colombia are subject to tariffs at a level that create an uneven trade relationship and represent a barrier to the equitable treatment of U.S. exports; and

3. **WHEREAS**, the U.S.-Colombia Free Trade Agreement will provide duty free market access for U.S exports, and immediate elimination of duties on 53 percent of U.S. trade with Colombia; and

4. **WHEREAS** the elimination of tariffs on U.S. goods through the U.S.-Colombia Free Trade Agreement will create a fairer and more balanced trade relationship that will help the U.S. agricultural, manufacturing and other sectors and create jobs in the United States; and

5. **WHEREAS**, trade and economic development are a critical building block for stable and secure democracies, and Colombia is an important and valued economic and geopolitical ally in the hemisphere; and

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6. **WHEREAS**, Colombia is the longest standing democracy in South America, and the United States and Colombia have shared a long and enduring friendship, a strong economic partnership, and have been and continue to be close strategic allies; and

7. **WHEREAS**, over the past decade the United States has appropriated more than \$5 billion in aid to Colombia to battle violent insurgents and curb the production of illicit drugs; and
8. **WHEREAS**, the U.S.-Colombia Free Trade Agreement will strengthen civil society and promote continued economic growth and greater stability in Colombia, opening and enhancing market opportunity for U.S. producers of goods and services; and
9. **WHEREAS**, cities and metropolitan areas are recognized as the engines of the national economy representing over 85 percent of the nation's employment, income and gross domestic product, and trade liberalization provides benefits to the nation's cities in the form of increased employment and revenues; and
10. **WHEREAS**, the total trade between the U.S and Colombia for 2006 was estimated at \$14.7 billion with imports accounting for \$8.7 billion and exports at \$6.04 billion; and
11. **WHEREAS**, 90 percent of Colombian exports already enter the United States duty free as a result of the Andean Trade Preferences Act of 1991; and
12. **WHEREAS**, the U.S.-Colombia Free Trade Agreement levels the playing field for U.S. exporters and enhances competition, moving this important economic and geopolitical relationship beyond a one-way preference to reciprocal commitments and full partnership; and
13. **WHEREAS**, with passage of the U.S.-Colombia Free Trade Agreement, U.S. exports to Colombia are projected to increase by over \$1 billion; and
14. **WHEREAS**, the U.S.-Colombia Free Trade Agreement commits the United States and Colombia to effectively enforce their own domestic environmental laws and adopt, maintain and implement laws, regulations and other measures to fulfill
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obligations under covered multilateral environmental agreements; and
15. **WHEREAS**, under very difficult circumstances Colombia's democratically-elected government has taken exceptional

steps to ensure the rule of law, combat narcotics traffickers and the illicit drug trade and rein in paramilitary groups, with the result that security has improved greatly in Colombia since 2000; and

16. **WHEREAS**, the U.S. Conference of Mayors has enjoyed a long history of close relations with the cities and government of Colombia, lending their direct support for Plan Colombia in 2000; and

17. **WHEREAS**, the National Hispanic Caucus of State Legislators adopted a resolution in support of the U.S.-Colombia Free Trade Agreement in November of 2007; and

18. **WHEREAS**, the U.S. Conference of Mayors has endorsed such free trade agreements in the past, including the U.S.Australia Free Trade Agreement in 2003 and the U.S.-Southern African Customs Union Free Trade Agreement in 2004, and the U.S. Congress recently ratified a free trade agreement with Peru in December 2007 very similar to that proposed for Colombia,

19. **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that The United States Conference of Mayors supports the speedy negotiation and passage of the U.S.-Colombia Free Trade Agreement and hereby affirms to all members of the United States Congress its strongest endorsement of such an agreement; and

20. **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that a copy of this resolution be provided to the President of the United States, the Chairs and Ranking Members of the U.S. Senate Finance and the U.S. House Ways and Means Committees, the U.S. Trade Representative, the Secretary of Commerce, the Secretary of Labor and the Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

Projected Cost: Unknown

Source:

<http://usmayors.org/76thAnnualMeeting/ProposedResolutions.pdf>