

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

May 11, 2009

President Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Obama:

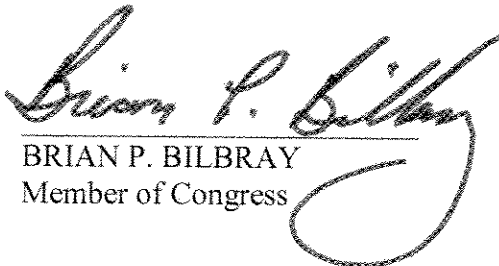
On June 28, 2007, the United States and Panama signed a comprehensive free trade agreement after two and a half years of negotiation. While this agreement was not formally presented to Congress and implemented in the 110th Congress, it is our hope that a finalized implementing bill can be introduced and passed by the 111th Congress as quickly as possible. We urge you to work with Congress to gain support for this agreement and look forward to working with you to achieve this goal.

The Panama Trade Promotion Agreement would allow 88 percent of U.S. exports to enter Panama duty free upon implementation. Within 17 years of approval, 100 percent of Panamanian tariffs would be eliminated, to the mutual benefit of U.S. and Panamanian firms and workers. Additionally, approval of this agreement would give U.S. companies an inside track to participating in the \$5 billion Panama Canal expansion project. The expansion of the canal is one of the largest public infrastructure improvements in the world, and U.S. engineering, technology, and finance firms would be strong competitors to take on much of the work, while also sharing in long-term potential benefits.

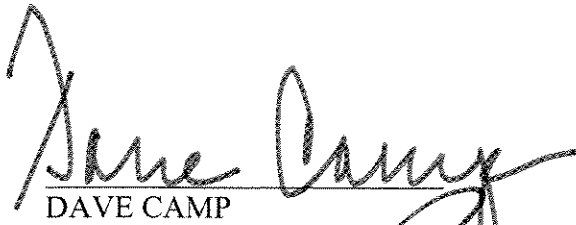
While there have been some concerns with labor and environmental issues, Panama has proactively addressed these issues by adopting the five basic internationally recognized labor standards, as stated in the International Labor Organization (ILO) Declaration, and adopting strengthened commitments to environmental standards in the text of the agreement.

It is our hope that the Administration will work with Congress to assure expedient passage of the agreement. The United States and Panama have enjoyed a historic partnership and we look forward to working with you to ensure the completion of this agreement and the continued partnership between our two countries.

Sincerely,


BRIAN P. BILBRAY
Member of Congress

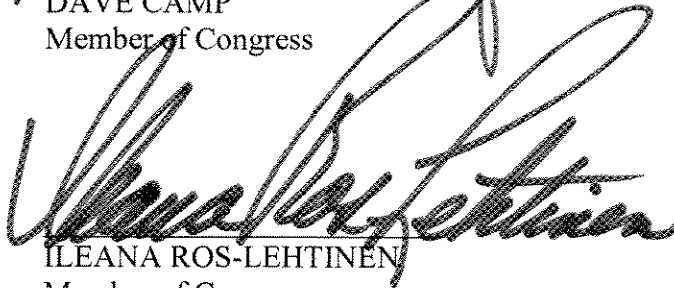

WALT MINNICK
Member of Congress



DAVE CAMP
Member of Congress



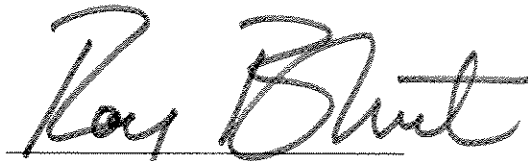
JAMES P. MORAN
Member of Congress



ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN
Member of Congress



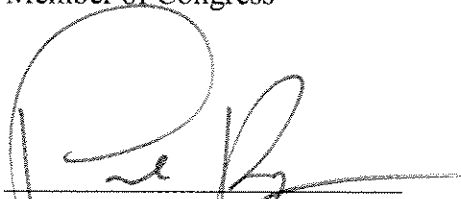
MICHAEL E. MCMAHON
Member of Congress



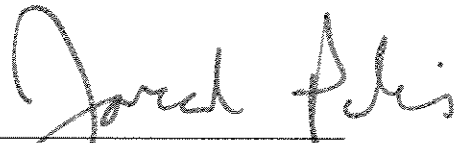
ROY BLUNT
Member of Congress



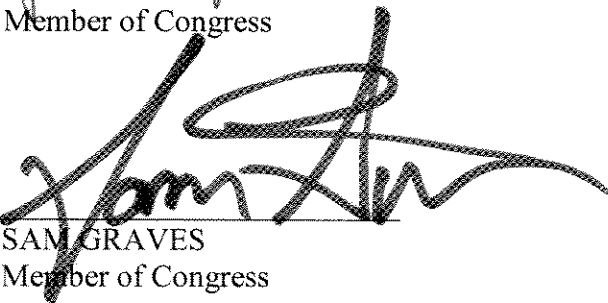
HENRY CUELLAR
Member of Congress



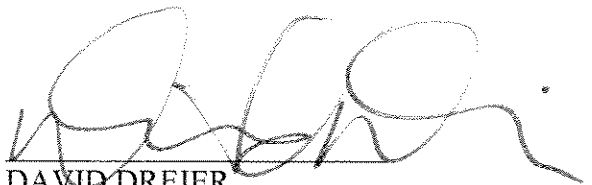
PAUL RYAN
Member of Congress



JARED POLIS
Member of Congress



SAM GRAVES
Member of Congress



DAVID DREIER
Member of Congress



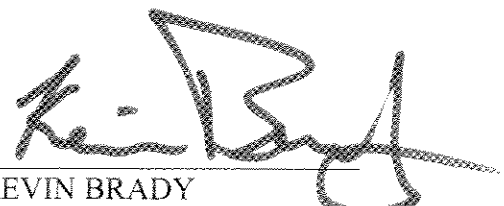
DOC HASTINGS
Member of Congress



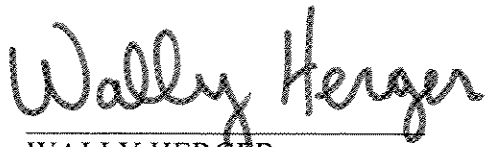
STEVE BUYER
Member of Congress



VERNON J. EHLERS
Member of Congress



KEVIN BRADY
Member of Congress



WALLY HERGER
Member of Congress



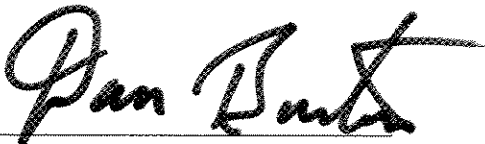
PATRICK J. TIBERI
Member of Congress



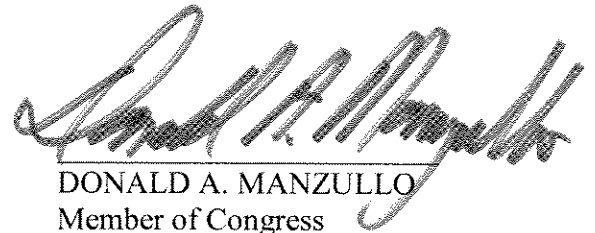
CONNIE MACK
Member of Congress



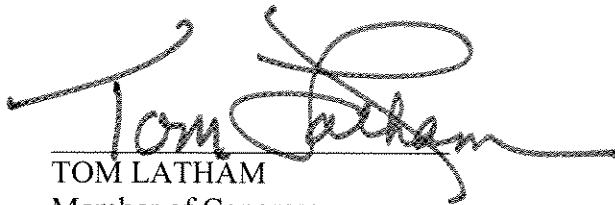
EDWARD R. ROYCE
Member of Congress



DAN BURTON
Member of Congress



DONALD A. MANZULLO
Member of Congress




TOM LATHAM
Member of Congress



SCOTT GARRETT
Member of Congress



JUDY BIGGERT
Member of Congress



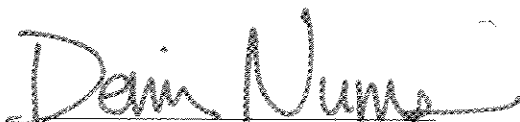
JEFF FLAKE
Member of Congress



DOUG LAMBORN
Member of Congress



PETE SESSIONS
Member of Congress




DEVIN NUNES
Member of Congress




GEOFF DAVIS
Member of Congress



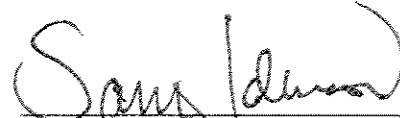
DAVID G. REICHERT
Member of Congress



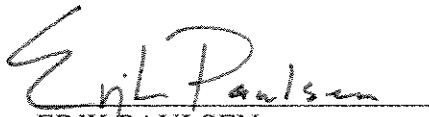
CHARLES W. BOUSTANY, JR.
Member of Congress



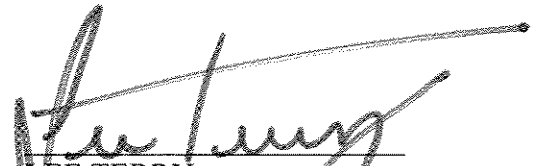
DEAN HELLER
Member of Congress




SAM JOHNSON
Member of Congress




ERIK PAULSEN
Member of Congress



LEE TERRY
Member of Congress



JOSEPH R. PITTS
Member of Congress



AARON SCHOCK
Member of Congress



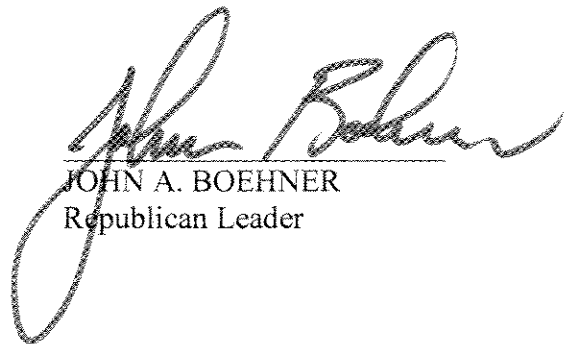
STEVE SCALISE
Member of Congress



PETER J. ROSKAM
Member of Congress




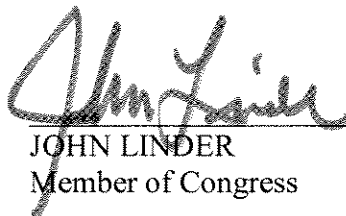
ERIC CANTOR
Member of Congress



JOHN A. BOEHNER
Republican Leader


GINNY BROWN-WAITE
Member of Congress


MIKE PENCE
Member of Congress


JOHN LINDER
Member of Congress