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The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable John A. Boehner
Republican Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Republican Leader Boehner:

On behalf of the Information Technology Industry Council (ITI), a trade association representing America's leading high-tech companies, I am writing to express our disappointment with the apparent collapse of our country's free trade agenda.

Opening foreign markets to U.S. goods and services is crucial to our prosperity. Indeed, exports are an increasingly powerful engine of growth for the American economy. For more than three decades, Democratic and Republican Administrations have utilized the tools afforded them in the Trade Act of 1974 to break down barriers to trade around the world. The events that culminated in today's vote to remove the 90-day time limit on consideration of the United States-Colombia Trade Promotion Agreement represents a significant blow to this tradition and sets an unfortunate precedent that may adversely impact how we conduct our trade relations in the future. This important agreement continues to have bipartisan support and we urge Congress and the White House to work together to pass the agreement and salvage our overall trade agenda.

ITI is also concerned by the stalled effort to renew Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA). As a long-time supporter of TAA, ITI and our member companies understand that a renewed and strengthened social safety net is necessary to offset any unintended consequences of trade agreements. ITI supported the House-passed legislation to renew and strengthen TAA last fall, and we believe that speedy enactment will help improve the climate for trade.

Trade is too important to our economy, particularly for the high-tech industry, for it to fall victim to internecine partisan battles. We strongly urge leaders in the House and Senate to work with the White House to get our trade agenda back on track and pass the U.S.-Colombia Trade Promotion Agreement as soon as possible. Further, we hope that leaders can quickly reach agreement on a robust TAA package. We cannot overstate the enormity of the stakes involved for American prosperity and global leadership.

Sincerely,

Rhett Dawson
President and CEO