

Dear Colleague:

Please take a moment to review the information below regarding the recent support that the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) has given to the passage of the Columbia Free Trade agreement.

Sincerely,

/s/

Henry Cuellar, Ph.D.  
U.S Member of Congress  
28<sup>th</sup> District of Texas

***LULAC: New Thinking on Colombia Trade Pact!***

As you may know, the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) is the largest and oldest Hispanic organization in the United States. In 2006, LULAC held its national convention and adopted a resolution urging its members to “Reject New Trade Agreements with Peru and Colombia.” In that document, LULAC expressed concerns about labor and environmental standards in the initial trade agreement with Colombia.

LULAC recently concluded its 2008 national convention, and passed a new resolution urging its members to “Support the NEW U.S.-Colombia Fair Trade Agreement.” This landmark change represents new thinking on the Colombia trade agreement. Led by the LULAC delegations from Florida, Texas and Puerto Rico, LUCLC took a second look at this trade agreement. It found that the Colombia trade agreement pending before Congress:

- Includes stronger language on ILO Core Labor standards, multilateral environmental agreements and enforcement were fully incorporated into the agreement in 2007;
- Reflects progress by the Colombian government in taking significant steps towards reducing violence, killings, and resulting in an increase in the capacity of the Colombian judiciary to prosecute labor violence cases; and
- Represents a “fair trade agreement” because it allows U.S. manufactured goods, agricultural products, and services to enter the Colombian market on par with the duty-free treatment afforded similar Colombian products entering the U.S. market since 1991.

**The 2008 LULAC resolution states:**

**“THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that LULAC and its corresponding councils of Florida, supports the passage of the US-Colombia Fair Trade Agreement and hereby affirms to all members of the United States Congress its strongest endorsement of such an agreement; and request that the Speaker of the House allow for the US-Colombia Fair Trade Agreement be discussed and permit a Up and Down vote to be decided by the house membership.”**

LULAC follows other national organizations including the U.S. Conference of Mayors, the Council of State Governments, the American Legislative Exchange Council, the National Hispanic Caucus of State Legislators, the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, and the Hispanic Trade and Business Alliance in expressing support for this trade agreement.

It is clear that the U.S.-Colombia Trade Promotion Agreement deserves approval from Congress and the trade agreement deserves a vote this year!