

But I just want to rise to say thank you to the majority leader for giving us time to try to resolve the differences that we might have.

Mr. BLUNT. Madam Speaker, I withdraw my objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Maryland?

There was no objection.

RENEWABLE ENERGY AND ENERGY CONSERVATION TAX ACT OF 2008

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the passage of the bill.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. McDERMOTT. Madam Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 236, nays 182, not voting 11, as follows:

[Roll No. 84]

YEAS—236

Abercrombie	Ellison	Lipinski
Ackerman	Ellsworth	LoBiondo
Allen	Emanuel	Loebsack
Altmire	Engel	Lofgren, Zoe
Andrews	Eshoo	Lowe
Arcuri	Etheridge	Lynch
Baca	Farr	Mahoney (FL)
Baird	Fattah	Maloney (NY)
Baldwin	Filner	Markey
Bean	Fortenberry	Marshall
Becerra	Frank (MA)	Matsui
Berkley	Giffords	McCarthy (NY)
Berman	Gilchrest	McColum (MN)
Berry	Gillibrand	McDermott
Bishop (GA)	Gonzalez	McGovern
Bishop (NY)	Gordon	McIntyre
Blumenauer	Green, Al	McNerney
Boswell	Grijalva	McNulty
Boucher	Gutierrez	Meek (FL)
Boyd (FL)	Hall (NY)	Meeks (NY)
Boyd (KS)	Hare	Michaud
Brady (PA)	Harman	Miller (NC)
Braley (IA)	Hastings (FL)	Miller, George
Brown, Corrine	Hayes	Mitchell
Buchanan	Herseth Sandlin	Mollohan
Butterfield	Higgins	Moore (KS)
Capps	Hill	Moore (WI)
Capuano	Hinchee	Moran (VA)
Cardoza	Hinojosa	Murphy (CT)
Carnahan	Hirono	Murphy, Patrick
Carney	Hodes	Murtha
Castle	Holden	Nadler
Castor	Holt	Napolitano
Chandler	Honda	Neal (MA)
Clarke	Hooley	Oberstar
Clay	Hoyer	Obey
Cleaver	Insee	Olver
Clyburn	Israel	Pallone
Cohen	Jackson (IL)	Pascarell
Conyers	Jackson-Lee	Pastor
Cooper	(TX)	Payne
Costa	Jefferson	Perlosi
Costello	Johnson (GA)	Perlmutter
Courtney	Johnson (IL)	Peterson (MN)
Cramer	Johnson, E. B.	Pomeroy
Crowley	Kagen	Price (NC)
Cummings	Kanjorski	Rahall
Davis (AL)	Kaptur	Ramstad
Davis (CA)	Kennedy	Rangel
Davis (IL)	Kildee	Reichert
Davis, Lincoln	Kilpatrick	Richardson
DeFazio	Kind	Rogers (AL)
DeGette	Kirk	Ros-Lehtinen
Delahunt	Klein (FL)	Ross
DeLauro	Kucinich	Rothman
Dicks	LaHood	Roybal-Allard
Dingell	Langevin	Ruppersberger
Doggett	Larsen (WA)	Rush
Donnelly	Larson (CT)	Ryan (OH)
Doyle	Lee	Salazar
Edwards	Levin	Sánchez, Linda
Ehlers	Lewis (GA)	T.

Sanchez, Loretta	Smith (WA)
Sarbanes	Snyder
Saxton	Solis
Schakowsky	Space
Schiff	Spratt
Schwartz	Stark
Scott (GA)	Stupak
Scott (VA)	Sutton
Serrano	Tanner
Sestak	Tauscher
Shays	Taylor
Shea-Porter	Thompson (CA)
Sherman	Thompson (MS)
Shuler	Tierney
Sires	Towns
Skelton	Tsongas
Slaughter	Udall (CO)
Smith (NJ)	Udall (NM)

NAYS—182

Akin	Franks (AZ)
Alexander	Frelinghuysen
Bachmann	Galleghy
Bachus	Garrett (NJ)
Barrett (SC)	Gerlach
Barrow	Gingrey
Bartlett (MD)	Gohmert
Barton (TX)	Goode
Biggert	Goodlatte
Bilbray	Granger
Bilirakis	Graves
Bishop (UT)	Green, Gene
Blackburn	Hall (TX)
Blunt	Hastings (WA)
Boehner	Heller
Bonner	Hensarling
Bono Mack	Herger
Boozman	Hobson
Boren	Hoekstra
Boustany	Hulshof
Brady (TX)	Hunter
Broun (GA)	Inglis (SC)
Brown (SC)	Issa
Burgess	Johnson, Sam
Burton (IN)	Jones (NC)
Buyer	Jordan
Calvert	King (IA)
Camp (MI)	King (NY)
Campbell (CA)	Kingston
Cannon	Kline (MN)
Cantor	Knollenberg
Capito	Kuhl (NY)
Carter	Lamborn
Chabot	Lampson
Chobert	Latham
Coble	LaTourette
Cole (OK)	Latta
Conaway	Lewis (CA)
Crenshaw	Lewis (KY)
Cubin	Linder
Cuellar	Lucas
Culberson	Mack
Davis (KY)	Manzullo
Davis, David	Marchant
Davis, Tom	McCarthy (CA)
Deal (GA)	McCaul (TX)
Dent	McCotter
Diaz-Balart, L.	McCrery
Doolittle	McHenry
Drake	McHugh
Dreier	McKeon
Duncan	McMorris
Emerson	Rodgers
English (PA)	Rodgers
Everett	Melancon
Fallin	Miller (FL)
Feeney	Miller, Gary
Ferguson	Moran (KS)
Flake	Murphy, Tim
Forbes	Musgrave
Fossella	Myrick
Foxx	Neugebauer

NOT VOTING—11

Aderholt	Keller	Miller (MI)
Brown-Waite,	Lungren, Daniel	Reyes
Ginny	E.	Woolsey
Diaz-Balart, M.	Matheson	
Jones (OH)	Mica	

□ 1630

So the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated against:

Van Hollen
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz (MN)
Wasserman
Schultz
Waters
Watson
Watt
Waxman
Weiner
Welch (VT)
Wexler
Wilson (OH)
Wu
Wynn
Yarmuth

Mr. MICA. Madam Speaker, I was unavoidably detained and was unable to cast a vote on rollcall 84. Had I been present, I would have voted “nay” on the measure.

APPOINTMENT OF MEMBER TO BOARD OF VISITORS TO UNITED STATES NAVAL ACADEMY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 6968(a), and the order of the House of January 4, 2007, the Chair announces the Speaker’s appointment of the following Member of the House to the Board of Visitors to the United States Naval Academy to fill the existing vacancy thereon:

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN, New Jersey

ANDEAN TRADE PREFERENCE EXTENSION ACT OF 2008

Mr. LEVIN. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 5264) to extend certain trade preference programs, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 5264

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Andean Trade Preference Extension Act of 2008”.

SEC. 2. ANDEAN TRADE PREFERENCE ACT.

(a) EXTENSION.—Section 208 of the Andean Trade Preference Act (19 U.S.C. 3206) is amended by striking “February 29, 2008” and inserting “December 31, 2008”.

(b) TREATMENT OF CERTAIN APPAREL ARTICLES.—Section 204(b)(3) of the Andean Trade Preference Act (19 U.S.C. 3203(b)(3)(B)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (B)—

(A) in clause (iii)—

(i) in subclause (II), by striking “5 succeeding 1-year periods” and inserting “6 succeeding 1-year periods”; and

(ii) in subclause (III)(bb), by inserting “and for the succeeding 1-year period,” after “for the 1-year period beginning October 1, 2007,”; and

(B) in clause (v)(II), by striking “4 succeeding 1-year periods” and inserting “5 succeeding 1-year periods”; and

(2) in subparagraph (E)(ii)(II), by striking “December 31, 2006” and inserting “December 31, 2008”.

SEC. 3. CUSTOMS USER FEES.

Section 13031(j)(3) of the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1985 (19 U.S.C. 58c(j)(3)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (A), by striking “December 13, 2014” and inserting “December 27, 2014”; and

(2) in subparagraph (B)(i), by striking “December 13, 2014” and inserting “December 27, 2014”.

SEC. 4. TIME FOR PAYMENT OF CORPORATE ESTIMATED TAXES.

The percentage under subparagraph (C) of section 401(1) of the Tax Increase Prevention and Reconciliation Act of 2005 in effect on the date of the enactment of this Act is increased by 0.25 percentage points.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN) and the gentleman from California (Mr. HERGER) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Michigan.

Mr. LEVIN. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise today in support of extending the Andean Trade Preference Act, which provides duty-free treatment to certain exports from Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru.

The ATPA program is a program that has been working. It has benefited the region by providing much-needed economic development to these four countries. There is also some evidence that it has helped create some alternatives to the illegal drug trade.

Importantly, and I emphasize this, this has all been accomplished in a way that is more complementary than it is competitive; so there have been economic benefits for the four nations and for our Nation. In fact, if you exclude oil and oil products, the U.S. has a trade surplus with the region. We export about \$13 billion to these four countries, and they export about \$11 billion to us.

Beyond the numbers, the composition of the trade is also complementary. With agriculture, it's the seasonal nature of the trade. Crops from these countries tend to be imported when the U.S. crops they compete with are not in season.

It's also complementary in textiles and apparel trade. Under ATPA the U.S. textile industry ships U.S. yarns and fabrics to the region, and they export to us apparel made with those U.S. inputs. In fact, U.S. exports of yarn and fabric to the region were \$111 million in 2007, up from \$58 million in 2002. The only apparel that comes in duty free that is not made with U.S. yarn and fabrics is made with materials that we don't have in our country like pima cotton and alpaca.

It's the complementary nature of this trade that has generated widespread support for the extension of this program, including support from the business community and the labor community.

Concerns have been raised about whether Ecuador and Bolivia are living up to their ATPA obligations and treating U.S. investors fairly. And the answer is, and I want this to be clear, that the administration has the authority to revoke ATPA status to any country failing to meet any of the ATPA criteria, and there is a broad range of them, including those related to the treatment of investors.

If this program is not extended, it would be mutually disadvantageous to both the United States and to these four countries.

I want to emphasize, as I did some months ago when there was an extension, we are talking today about the Andean Trade Preference Act. We are not talking about any other FTA, whether it be Colombia, Korea, or any other place. Each agreement must be decided on its own merits. In any respect, therefore, it would be counterproductive to vote against extending the Andean Trade Preference Act.

I strongly urge approval of this 10-month extension.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HERGER. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I rise in support of this short-term extension of the Andean trade preferences. This extension will provide a necessary bridge to provide time for the implementation of the U.S.-Peru Trade Promotion Agreement and for Congress to consider the U.S.-Colombia Trade Promotion Agreement.

The short duration of the extension signifies that Congress is concerned with the deteriorating investment climate for U.S. investors in Ecuador and Bolivia and that these countries must quickly and completely comply with all their international obligations with regard to investment disputes. While the Andean trade preference program provides important economic benefits to exporters in Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru, it is not a substitute for moving toward a reciprocal arrangement that also provides benefits to U.S. exporters. Congress has already taken the first step in this process by passing the U.S.-Peru Trade Promotion Agreement. Now Congress must take the next step to pass the U.S.-Colombia Trade Promotion Agreement.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LEVIN. Madam Speaker, it is now my pleasure to yield 4 minutes to my colleague from Washington (Mr. McDERMOTT), a valued member of the committee.

(Mr. McDERMOTT asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. McDERMOTT. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of shaping globalization to ensure that its benefits are shared more broadly, particularly for the vulnerable living in America or in developing countries.

President Kennedy said that American apathy "would be disastrous to our national security, harmful to our comparative prosperity, and offensive to our conscience." His observation rings true today perhaps more than yesterday. Globalization is not helping the poor around the world as much as it is helping the rich. We have a moral obligation to adjust our trade and development policies to reverse this situation.

The bill before us would extend a program that's enabling developing countries within our own hemisphere to diversify and grow their own economies. The Andean trade preference program has enabled the creation of jobs in Peru, Colombia, and Ecuador by reducing import tariffs on American-bound products from these countries.

These economies are doing well in part because of the partnership achieved through ATPA, so it's important that we extend this program in order to not undo the progress that has

been achieved in what can be a very economically and politically fragile region of our hemisphere.

This extension, while important, is a baby step. It is imperative that this Congress this year examine the need to reform our trade policies to ensure we provide maximum opportunity to the poorest of the world's poor.

One of six children in Africa, where the majority of the world's poor live, will die before reaching age 5, on a continent where hunger is a key factor in more deaths than those caused by all infectious disease.

The United States, in agreeing to the Millennium Development Goals in 2000, committed to fully opening our markets to the least developed countries. It's been 8 years. It's time to act.

The African Growth and Opportunity Act and the Generalized System of Preferences continues to fall short. I'm really disappointed that we could not achieve bipartisan consensus on making some modest improvements in GSP and AGOA within this bill, but I am confident we will reach consensus in the future.

Madam Speaker, I will enter into the RECORD a letter from the Catholic Bishops. This letter encourages us to pass the bill before us and pass legislation to improve our trade policies with the least developed countries.

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE, PEACE,
AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT,
Washington, DC, February 25, 2008.

Hon. HENRY M. PAULSON, JR.,
Secretary of the Treasury,
Washington, DC.

Ambassador SUSAN SCHWAB,
U.S. Trade Representative,
Washington, DC.

Senator HARRY REID,
Majority Leader, U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

Senator MITCH MCCONNELL,
Minority Leader, U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

Hon. JOHN BOEHNER,
Minority Leader, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SECRETARY PAULSON, AMBASSADOR SCHWAB, SENATOR REID, SENATOR MCCONNELL, SPEAKER PELOSI, AND CONGRESSMAN BOEHNER: I am writing on behalf of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) to offer reflections on several key trade measures that Congress may act on this year.

USCCB takes a particular interest in trade policy and legislation because of its potential to promote integral human development in the poorest countries and among the poorest communities around the world. Much more than fostering economic growth, trade should play an essential role in reducing poverty by helping to shape domestic and international legal frameworks to protect workers and the environment, ensure opportunities for decent work at a just wage for struggling families and provide access to technology and knowledge for those at the margins of society.

In the Church's vision, economic life should be guided by a moral framework that respects the life and dignity of every person. The Catechism of the Catholic Church teaches: "The human being is the author, center

and goal of all economic and social life. The decisive point of the social question is that goods created by God for everyone should in fact reach everyone in accordance with justice and with the help of charity." (# 2459)

Trade policy should include complementary policies and initiatives that promote equitable development for all people. Increased trade should leave no one behind, particularly the least among us. For this reason, the United States has an obligation to ensure that trade agreements reach beyond merely economic considerations to wider concerns of the common good of all and the well-being of the poorest in particular.

Some steps have been taken over the past year to improve current trade policies so that they foster genuine development. Last year, our Conference welcomed the bipartisan trade framework agreed to by Congressional leaders and the Administration. In 2008, there are several ways to build upon work already done to help make trade work for all:

Haiti Trade Preferences: USCCB actively worked for enactment of trade preference legislation for Haiti in 2006. The Haitian Hemispheric Opportunity through Partnership Encouragement (HHOPE) Act was an initial step in building trade capacity that offered some Haitians a chance to escape poverty and build a future for themselves and their families. HHOPE's successes are modest but real. USCCB urges you to work to improve the existing legislation in ways that lead to longer-term development. The United States should seize the earliest opportunity to make a significant improvement in the lives of Haitians.

Andean Trade Preferences (ATPDEA): USCCB supports long-term renewal of trade preferences for Bolivia, Ecuador, Colombia and Peru. The Andean countries continue to have high levels of poverty. The original intention of this program was to help poor countries in the hemisphere diversify their economies in ways that would offer alternatives to illicit drug crop production. Weakening these export opportunities may also weaken counter-narcotics efforts in the Andean region. The recent practice of short-term extensions of these trade preferences is damaging to economic development. Our nation should not hold some of the poorest people in the Hemisphere in economic limbo in the hope of gaining leverage in efforts to pass other bilateral agreements. The poor must not be made to compete for trade preferences that are a vital part of reducing deprivation.

New Partnership for Development Act (NPDA) H.R. 3905: H.R. 3905 would create a mutually beneficial trade relationship between the world's richest economy and the world's least developed countries. NPDA would help ensure that the poorest countries can benefit from appropriate trade preferences by including significant trade capacity building assistance. The poor should have "preference" as the Church teaches. NPDA makes this preference concrete; showing that U.S. trade policy can become more effective and fair.

United States-Colombia Free Trade Agreements: The May 2007 bipartisan trade policy framework led to some improvements in the trade agreement between the United States and Peru. The United States-Colombia trade agreement reflects these changes. The changes made to the intellectual property provisions within the agreement that would more readily ensure access to life-saving medicines are particularly important. However, the likely negative impact of the agreement on Colombia's small farmers and rural communities is troubling. There must be more effective mechanisms to alleviate the adverse effects on Colombia's rural commu-

nities. Rural desperation could lead to increased coca production with dire consequences not only for Colombia, but for the United States and the entire region. Given its multifaceted provisions, USCCB does not take an overall position on the agreement, but it is our hope that the debate and decisions on the proposed U.S.-Colombia FTA lead to improved and meaningful steps forward in advancing fair trade relations between the countries.

With good wishes for your efforts to make trade work for all and for poor people in particular, I remain,

Sincerely yours,

THOMAS G. WENSKI,
Bishop of Orlando,
Chairman, Committee on International Justice and Peace.

In conclusion, the contrast between the lives led by those enriched countries and those in poor countries is only less scandalous than this Congress's apathy if we fail to act. I'm looking forward to working with my colleagues on renewing America's leadership and promoting development around the world. The first step in this process is passing H.R. 5264, which is before us today.

Mr. HERGER. Madam Speaker, at this time I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. WELLER), an active member of the Ways and Means Committee and very active in trade, particularly in Central and South America.

Mr. WELLER of Illinois. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of this important legislation, bipartisan legisla-

I note it's a 10-month extension of the existing trade preferences we grant our friends in Bolivia, Ecuador, Peru, and Colombia. What's important about this 10 months is it gives us ample opportunity for our friends in Peru to work with us to implement the recently ratified U.S.-Peru Trade Promotion Agreement. It gives us the opportunity over the next 10 months to move forward on ratification of the U.S.-Colombia Trade Promotion Agreement, of course Colombia being our most reliable partner for the United States in Latin America.

But today we want to talk about trade preferences for the Andean region. When you think about it, 2 million families today are watching the United States Congress. Two million families in the four countries in the Andean region have jobs and livelihoods that depend on the trade preferences. If the trade preferences go away, the livelihood for those 2 million families goes away.

Peru, 800,000 jobs have been created by trade preferences. Colombia, 600,000 jobs. Ecuador, 350,000 jobs. Bolivia, up to 150,000 jobs directly and indirectly created as a result of the Andean trade preferences. And when you think about it, what's the alternative? In this region, which is seeking opportunity, and thanks to the U.S. Congress and the Bush administration we have worked to create these trade preferences, the

alternatives, if they lose their jobs, are they become part of the wave of illegal immigration as they seek economic opportunities or to become involved in illicit activity, such as the growing of coca and involved in narcotrafficking networks. They don't want to do that. They want good, honest jobs, and the trade preferences give them that.

This past week I was part of a bipartisan delegation visiting Ecuador and Bolivia with my friend ELIOT ENGEL and others. It was a bipartisan delegation. We saw firsthand how regular folks, little people, workers, small businesses, men and women, particularly those who in the past have been denied economic opportunity, because of the trade preferences, the opportunity to export to the U.S. market, they have economic opportunity.

□ 1645

In Otavalo, Ecuador, we met with a women's cooperativo where they made sweaters and textiles for the U.S. market. We visited those who are involved in cacao production for the purpose of making chocolate, and they are creating organic chocolates that we consume, they can sell in the U.S. market. We, of course, visited organic coffee growers, and we saw how they can take advantage of preferences creating jobs in Ecuador. In Bolivia we visited a textile factory where thousands of workers who otherwise would not have jobs were involved in making garments, assembling textiles and various materials inputs that are manufactured in the United States that are assembled in La Paz, Bolivia, creating jobs and economic opportunity. The point is easily well made that without the trade preferences, those jobs go away.

And what is the consequence to America? Another wave of illegal immigration, people seeking economic opportunity, the temptation to become involved in the growing of coca and other crops that are used for narcotics.

What is really important I think to note is when we talk about what we as Americans can do to help lift up our neighbors, the trade preferences really work. They come at little or no cost to the United States. But they create a tremendous amount of opportunity in the democracies of Bolivia, Ecuador, Peru and Colombia.

I urge bipartisan support.

Mr. LEVIN. Madam Speaker, it is now my privilege to yield 3 minutes to our distinguished colleague from California (Mr. BECERRA).

Mr. BECERRA. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

I too rise in support of this bill, H.R. 5264, to extend the Andean Trade Preference Act for another 10 months to our friends and allies in Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru.

At some point, we are going to find that this Congress will move closer to a bipartisan trade agenda because for many years, it was absent, but I think you see in the seeds of this legislation and in previous actions on the Peru

Free Trade Agreement the opportunities for us to not only move towards a bipartisan trade agenda, but quite honestly a nonpartisan trade agenda where what we are talking about is an American trade agenda that promotes the interests of our workers and of our industries and so that when we reach a hand out to our neighbors whether in our hemisphere or otherwise, we are doing this in a way that promotes not just competition, healthy competition among our friends, but it also makes it possible for us to move forward the thing that will keep the engine of American ingenuity going.

And so as we try to figure out how to open the doors to the markets of the world, to our interests, so that our American workers can continue to produce more goods and goods of excellent quality, we will be able to open our door to the goods of other countries where, based on a fair trade agenda, we can do so and feel comfortable that we are bringing in quality goods that are safe and reliable here in the U.S. for its use.

Now whether you are with the labor movement, and the AFL-CIO has come out and supported this extension, or whether you are with the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, which has also come out in support of this, I think what we are finding is that the seeds can be planted for us to move forward on trade in a way that leaves out the words "party affiliation" completely and lets us talk about how the trade agenda for this country, for America, will be not only advanced but benefit so many people in this country who work.

I believe that this is a chance for us to show our friends in Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru that we want to strengthen our friendship with them, that we want to increase our ties with our hemispheric neighbors and make this into something that leads towards an American agenda on trade that we can all feel very comfortable with and get resounding support in this House.

Mr. HERGER. Madam Speaker, I yield now at this time 3 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BRADY), again an active member of Ways and Means and the Trade Subcommittee.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from California for his leadership on trade issues.

I too rise in support of this bill. I think it is important for Peru to have the transition time to enact the free trade agreement we just worked on. It is important to buy additional time for us to discuss and ultimately pass the Colombian Free Trade Agreement. And I think it is important for our friends in Bolivia and Ecuador to understand that these preferences are temporary, that we want a full trading partnership with them, and it is important that they take concrete steps to move toward the types of signals and improvements in their country, in government, that would allow us ultimately to move to a full partnership for free trade.

When we began this trade agreement, trade preferences in the 1990s, our hope was to create jobs away from drug trafficking in these countries, and it has worked. Millions of jobs have been created benefiting not just the Andean region, but the American workers as well. But this bill is no substitute for a free trade agreement with Colombia. Today we are allowing these countries to sell duty-free, almost without restrictions, into the United States, competing against our workers. We are doing that to help pull them toward democracy, to stimulate their economy, to move them away from narcotrafficking. And it is working. But what we want ultimately is two-way trade. We want the ability of our factory workers, our plant workers, our steelworkers in Texas, for example, today they can go down to the store and buy products from Colombia, Bolivia and Ecuador but when we try to sell the products they produce overseas, we are not allowed to. The barriers exist. How is that free trade? How is that fair to the American workers? It is to me irresponsible for us to not take up the Colombian Free Trade Agreement. This is a country with a growing economy. It is a strong ally to the United States. It has made remarkable progress on labor violence. They are in the midst of a civil war. And President Uribe is taking commendable steps, strong leadership steps to solidify that country, to bring democracy and the rule of law, to prosecute those violators. He has made remarkable progress in quelling violence against labor leaders. And indeed unions, productive unions in Colombia support this free trade agreement. For those who believe America is going it alone far too much in the world, it is incomprehensible we would go it alone without Colombia, that we would leave them, walk away from our commitments in that region. It is vital both from an economic standpoint and vital from a security standpoint that we take up and pass the Colombian Free Trade Agreement this year.

Mr. LEVIN. It is now my pleasure to yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL) who is indeed very active in these international issues.

Mr. ENGEL. I thank the gentleman for yielding to me.

Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 5264 which extends trade preferences for Peru, Colombia, Ecuador and Bolivia. I want to thank Chairman LEVIN and Chairman RANGEL, the dean of our New York delegation, for their leadership on this issue. This is certainly a bipartisan issue, and it is a very, very important issue.

I am the chairman of the Western Hemisphere Subcommittee of the House Foreign Affairs Committee. And as chairman of that subcommittee, I believe that the extension of the Andean Trade Preferences is crucial in promoting the development of the economically and politically fragile Andean region while at the same time sup-

porting the United States' geopolitical goals.

ATPDEA has been enormously successful, as all my colleagues have stated, having created hundreds of thousands of jobs in the Andean region. Every job created in the Andean region, as was mentioned before, is another potential illegal immigrant remaining in their home country. Without the extension of ATPDEA, these jobs, which are in sectors that do not directly compete with U.S. jobs, will be eliminated.

I just returned a few short days ago from leading a bipartisan congressional delegation which included Ecuador and Bolivia. In fact, Madam Speaker, at this time I will submit into the RECORD a letter that the five of us who were on the trip sent around to the rest of our colleagues supporting the extension of the Andean Trade Preferences, signed by myself, Mr. WELLER, Mr. HINCHEY, Mr. GREEN, and Ms. FOXX.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
Washington, DC, February 25, 2008.

SUPPORT EXTENSION OF THE ANDEAN TRADE
PREFERENCES

DEAR COLLEAGUE: Having just returned from a CODEL to Ecuador and Bolivia, we are writing to urge you to vote for H.R. 5264—which would extend trade preferences for Colombia, Peru, Ecuador and Bolivia for 10 months—when it is on the House floor on Tuesday. While many of us would prefer a longer term extension of ATPDEA, we believe that a 10 month extension is a good start.

We are a bipartisan group of Members who believe that the Andean Trade Promotion and Drug Eradication Act (ATPDEA) is a win-win for both the citizens of the Andean region and the U.S. private sector. ATPDEA has literally created hundreds of thousands of jobs in the Andean region, while at the same time supporting essential U.S. geopolitical goals.

We fear that if the Andean trade preference program is eliminated, many of the unemployed would turn to drug cultivation after they lose their jobs. Assistant Secretary of State for Western Hemisphere Affairs Tom Shannon has argued that ATPDEA, "has been an important counterpoint to drug production in the region. It's produced hundreds of thousands of jobs in the region, so in that sense it's been a very, very successful program." We firmly agree.

We visited with producers of flowers, broccoli, coffee, cacao and other products in Ecuador. Without ATPDEA, workers in these sectors would undoubtedly lose their jobs, leaving them with little option outside of the illegal drug trade or illegal immigration to the United States.

In Bolivia—the poorest country in South America—we met with textile workers whose jobs would also be eliminated without an extension of ATPDEA. Many of these workers are indigenous women, who are among the most historically marginalized members of society in Bolivia and throughout the Andean region.

Finally, failure to extend ATPDEA would put many U.S. jobs at risk. For example, U.S. yarns, fabrics, fibers and other textile inputs are exported to the Andean region, where they are incorporated into finished garments and exported back into the United States.

While we all supported ATPDEA prior to our trip, meeting firsthand with the people

in Ecuador and Bolivia who are directly impacted by ATPDEA renewed our commitment to this crucial trade preference program. Please join us in supporting the citizens of the Andean region by voting for H.R. 5264 when it is on the House floor on Tuesday.

Sincerely,

ELIOT L. ENGEL,
Chairman, Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere.
MAURICE HINCHEY,
Member of Congress.
JERRY WELLER,
Member of Congress.
GENE GREEN,
Member of Congress.
VIRGINIA FOXX,
Member of Congress.

We visited on the trip with producers of flowers, broccoli, coffee, cacao and other products. Without the Andean Trade Preferences, workers in these sectors would undoubtedly lose their jobs, leaving them with little option outside of the illegal drug trade or illegal immigration to the United States.

In Bolivia, which is the poorest country in South America, my delegation met with textile workers whose jobs would also be eliminated without an extension of ATPDEA. Many of these workers are indigenous women who are among the most historically marginalized members of society in Bolivia and throughout the Andean region.

I truly fear that without the extension of ATPDEA, many of the unemployed in the Andean region would turn to drug cultivation after they lose their jobs. The Andean preference program was originally created not only to support economic development in the region but also to divert illegal coca manufacturing towards legitimate industries. Using these trade preferences as a tool in the drug war is no less important today. Indeed it is more important.

While I have been a long-time supporter of ATPDEA, meeting firsthand with the people in Ecuador and Bolivia who are directly impacted by these crucial trade preferences renewed my commitment to it. Having visited Colombia twice in the past 4 months, I am also convinced that that country, along with Peru, would have great benefits from this bill.

We need to be engaged in the Western Hemisphere. If we don't, we do so at our own peril. And so I urge my colleagues overwhelmingly in a bipartisan fashion to please vote for this bill and send a very strong message to our friends in Latin America that the United States is a good partner and we can be counted on in time of need. It helps them. It helps us. It is a winner for both of us.

Mr. HERGER. Madam Speaker, can I inquire of the other side how many speakers they have remaining.

Mr. LEVIN. I am the only speaker remaining. Why don't you proceed.

Mr. HERGER. We have three more speakers on our side, and then I will close.

At this time I yield 2 minutes to my good friend, the gentleman from California, a member of the Foreign Affairs Committee, Mr. ROYCE.

Mr. ROYCE. While I support this legislation, we should be doing better, much better. And unfortunately, Madam Speaker, many in the majority are undermining our interests throughout the Andean region.

There is no excuse, in my view, for bottling up the Colombia TPA which should be on this floor. It is a much better proposal than what we are debating today. Without the Colombia TPA, we are denying American businesses and workers greater access to Colombia.

With this legislation today, American exporters will continue to pay tariffs to Colombia, 80 percent on beef, 15 percent on tractors. So unlike the Colombia TPA which slashes Colombian taxes on our exports, this bill does nothing to increase U.S. exports to Colombia or to the three other countries it includes.

It is ironic that many who routinely attack trade agreements are giving Colombia preferential treatment and getting little in return when there is so much opportunity. With the Colombia TPA, we could get on a two-way street, one that lifts American workers as well. We could also have a deal that is stronger on labor protections. But many in the majority are settling for less, and far less at that.

And then there are our strategic interests in Colombia. It is our closest partner in a very important region. Colombia is locked in a deadly struggle with well-financed forces, undemocratic, terrorist and drug trafficking forces. Its government has made great strides against the narcoterrorists and improved the economy for millions. It has significantly reduced violence against labor leaders. This is major progress for Colombia.

The Colombia TPA is the next step for our partnership. Instead, with our inaction we are kicking Colombia, jeopardizing our regional standing. This bill is a poor substitute for the Colombia TPA. I know the chairman would like to do more. Let's get to the real business of approving that important agreement.

Mr. HERGER. Madam Speaker, I yield at this time 2 minutes to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON), the ranking member of the Western Hemisphere Subcommittee on the Foreign Affairs Committee.

□ 1700

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Madam Speaker, I want to associate myself with the remarks just made by Mr. ROYCE of California. I think he made the case very well for the Colombian Free Trade Agreement.

Colombia has been a great friend of ours under President Uribe, and we ought to be doing more to make sure that that government down there is stable and that the trade with us im-

proves. Right now we have about a \$2.56 billion trade deficit, because they have access to our markets but we don't have access to theirs, like we should, because of the tariffs. If we pass a Colombian Free Trade Agreement, it will be a two-way street that will help them, will help us create more jobs in the United States, as well as more jobs in Colombia.

But there is more to it than that. Right now, there is a threat from the FARC guerrillas in Colombia, and right on the border is Venezuela. President Chavez of Venezuela has recognized the FARC down there and is kind of working with those people, and I think that is a peril that faces Colombia over the long haul. Having a strong free trade agreement that will create jobs and a stronger economy in Colombia I think will be one of the things that will help stop the terrorists down there, the FARC guerrillas, the ELN and those who may be coming out of Venezuela.

So I think this is a very good first step tonight. We are extending the trade preferences for the next 9 or 10 months, and I think that that is all right. But we need to get on with the business of making sure we pass a free trade agreement with Colombia, as we did with Peru. I think it is in our national interests and their national interests. They are a good friend, and we should get the job done.

Mr. HERGER. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Illinois (Mrs. BIGGERT).

Mrs. BIGGERT. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of this important legislation. The Andean Trade Preferences program continues to be a vital component of our efforts to promote peace, prosperity and stability in South America, and it should be extended.

But, Madam Speaker, listening to the debate today, I was reminded of an old adage that says "political friendships follow the trade lanes." Consider Colombia. The success of this program there demonstrates just how critical trade is to creating friendly and democrat allies in troubled regions.

But there is more that we can do and should be doing. We must act quickly to approve the Colombian Free Trade Agreement, not only to meet our international obligations, but to strengthen our economy by boosting U.S. exports to Latin America. Last year alone, my home State of Illinois exported \$214 million in merchandise to Colombia, ranking it fourth among the States. More importantly, Illinois exports to Colombia grew 136 percent between 2002 and 2006.

These trends are not unique. For all of our economic troubles, U.S. exports continue to drive profits and job growth. According to the Treasury Department's latest economic update, real exports have risen 7.7 percent in just the last four quarters.

A free trade agreement will promote even faster growth by giving U.S. exporters duty free access to Colombian

markets, the same access that our Colombian exporters already enjoy to the U.S. At the same time, it will strengthen our friendship with a vital ally and provide for stronger protection of the rights of laborers in that region.

Madam Speaker, the bill before us today is a good first step. I commend the chairman and ranking member of the Ways and Means Committee for their bipartisan efforts, and urge my colleagues to support this bill. But I also ask my colleagues to keep in mind that action today must be followed by action tomorrow. We must work as quickly as possible to pass the Colombian Free Trade Agreement in the coming months.

Mr. HERGER. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from California (Mr. DREIER), the ranking member of the Rules Committee, someone who has long been active in the area of trade.

(Mr. DREIER asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DREIER. Madam Speaker, I thank my very good friend from California, the ranking member of this very important Trade Subcommittee, and I congratulate my good friend from Michigan for moving forward this very important 10-month extension.

Obviously, it is clear that we are using this time to talk about the importance of coming together in a bipartisan way, working as Democrats and Republicans, to ensure that we are able to proceed to deal with both the economic as well as the national security implications of ultimately seeing us put into place the Colombian Free Trade Agreement.

One of the great misconceptions around here and one that unfortunately has been spread very widely, Madam Speaker, is the fact that many people say that the Government of Colombia has been involved in killing labor leaders. I have heard that said on many occasions. I think it is very unfortunate that that and things close to that have gotten out there, when in fact we have seen since 2002 a 50 percent increase in the level of funding for the Fiscalia, the entity spending a great deal of time prosecuting those who have been responsible for killings of those labor leaders.

Similarly, it is important to note that there are roughly 1,500 labor leaders who get protection provided by the Government of Colombia. They are working to ensure the safety of those labor leaders, number one; and, number two, they are working to ensure that they bring to justice those who might be responsible for any of those killings.

There is no desire on the part of the government to do that. The government has done everything it possibly can to demobilize the paramilitaries, the FARC, the ELN and others who have been involved in the narco-trafficking and other criminal activity that has taken place in the country.

There is no nation on the face of the Earth that in a 5-year period of time has gone through a greater transition than Colombia has, and the leadership of President Uribe and so many others in his country who are dedicated to the future of that nation have, I believe, laid the groundwork for us to ensure the strength of the relationship between our two countries and to deal with the national security implications.

I have to say in closing, Madam Speaker, that I truly do believe that this will help us stabilize this very important part of the Western Hemisphere.

Mr. HERGER. Madam Speaker, in closing, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, today we are voting on the Andean Preferences, but the U.S.-Colombia TPA is far superior to the Andean Trade Preferences in several very important ways. The Andean trade preferences program provides duty-free access for imports from Colombia, but not for U.S. exports to Colombia, which face an average duty of over 11 percent. As a result, U.S. exporters are at a major disadvantage.

Here are just a few of the examples in which imports from Colombia receive duty-free access to the U.S. markets and the significant tariffs U.S. exporters currently face which would be eliminated upon implementation of the U.S.-Colombia TPA: U.S. wheat, fruits and vegetables; soybean meal; paper products; aircraft; turbines; diesel engines; and tractors.

Passing the U.S.-Colombian TPA would level the playing field for U.S. exporters. However, the longer we wait, the worse the situation becomes. Currently, several countries, including Argentina, Brazil and Chile, have preferential access into the Colombian market. Canada and the EEU are close to completing trade agreements with Colombia that would provide their businesses with a competitive advantage in the Colombian market. All of these countries are major competitors with U.S. exporters.

Failure of Congress to pass the U.S.-Colombia TPA does not preserve the status quo. It exacerbates and magnifies disadvantages already faced by U.S. exporters.

Madam Speaker, the facts are clear: The U.S.-Colombian TPA is far superior in every way to the Andean Trade Preferences program, and Congress should use the next 10 months to pass the agreement for the benefit of U.S. businesses and U.S. workers.

Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. LEVIN. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

In closing, let me just emphasize a few points. Mr. RANGEL and I and others offered a bill for a longer extension than this one, but we weren't able to bring that about here on a bipartisan basis. So what we have today is a 10-month extension, and I very much urge its passage.

I simply want to emphasize that every program has to be considered on its own merits. This is a continuation of a preference program that has been mutually beneficial. This is not involving an FTA with any of these countries. FTAs involve different and broader considerations. So I think discussion of that must be left for a different time under different circumstances after different events have occurred.

Madam Speaker, I urge passage of this bill.

Mr. DREIER. Madam Speaker, I have always been a strong supporter of the Andean Trade Preference Act. These preferences have been critical in encouraging both development and liberalization in a key region. But as we look at where each of the four Andean nations stands today, we see that they are all at very different stages, with preferences having significance for different reasons.

Peru is a country that has made tremendous strides in its economic liberalization process while remaining a close political ally, and we have propelled our trade relationship forward through ratification of a free trade agreement (FTA). As we go through the implementation process, preferences are still necessary to provide continuity until the agreement is fully realized. But Peru has clearly graduated beyond one-sided preferences, and our engagement will only grow exponentially.

In the case of Colombia, once again, this is a country that has made outstanding progress on economic and political fronts, and has negotiated an FTA with us in good faith. We have left this agreement in limbo for far too long, and should vote to pass it immediately. I have supported repeated extensions of our preference system for Colombia, because it would be unfair to punish them for our inability to make progress. But this is a critical agreement that will help to lock in great gains, and we cannot afford to allow the U.S.-Colombia FTA to languish any longer.

Bolivia and Ecuador, however, have not made the great progress in liberalization that their neighbors have. Our trade preferences in these two countries are critically important, but for very different reasons. It is important for us to continue to engage with them, to encourage both economic and political liberalization. Preferences can help workers in these countries reach that first rung of the economic ladder. And with new opportunities come rising living standards, and momentum for greater reform.

However, there can be no progress without the rule of law. Both countries are facing great challenges on this front, with justice systems that are unable—or perhaps at times even unwilling—to uphold the law and create an environment that supports free markets and accountable governments. In some instances, there have been egregious abuses in the courts, punishing those who have invested in the economy and creating a powerful deterrent to other prospective investors. Both Bolivia and Ecuador have much to gain by focusing on strengthening the rule of law, and much to lose by neglecting to do so. Without an improved legal environment, our trade preferences will be of little value.

Furthermore, failure in this regard will erode support in Congress for preferences altogether. I believe the fact that we are considering only a ten-month extension of the program is a reflection, in part, of grave concerns

that many Members hold for the direction Bolivia and Ecuador are heading. It is my hope that ten months from now, when we again address the issue of preferences for the Andean countries, we will be witnessing a renewed commitment in these two countries for the reform and liberalization that are essential to eliminating poverty and improving the standard of living for every Bolivian and Ecuadorian.

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of the H.R. 5264, the Andean Trade Preference Act (ATPA), a program meant to assist the Andean countries in their economic development. The ATPA provides duty free treatment for 94 percent of imports from the four Andean nations—Colombia, Peru, Bolivia, and Ecuador.

The original Andean Trade Preferences Act was passed in 1991 and extended and expanded in 2002 with the Andean Trade Promotion and Drug Eradication Act (ATPDEA), and again extended last June 2007. This program is fundamental in our mission to foster trade-based economic relations between the United States and the Andean region and stimulate legitimate economic alternatives to narcotics production and trafficking in the Andean region.

If Congress does not pass the Andean Trade Preference Act, the previous extension of the program will expire on February 29, 2008. Renewing ATPA will continue to build on the program's success and help us achieve our larger policy goals for the Andean region. At a time of increasing economic uncertainty, it will help sustain critical U.S. jobs that are dependent on stable trade with and investments in the Andean region.

From 2003 to 2006, U.S. textile exports to the Andean region increased by more than \$50 million signifying a 40 percent increase. However, with the uncertainty the constant renewal brings, last year it was extended for 8 months 2 hours before it was set to expire, it has discouraged companies from continuing their investment in the Andean region.

Our current regional partnership is grounded on the joint struggle to eradicate the narcotics menace that terrorizes both the Andean region and the United States and to provide economic stability through trade. As the Andean region currently enjoys duty-free treatment, an expansion of these trade policies, like the U.S.-Peru Free Trade Agreement, would allow us to enter into a full partnership with the remaining Andean countries instead of just a one way trading benefit.

While free trade agreements are not on the immediate agenda of Congress, I urge a vote in favor of H.R. 5264, to extend trade preferences for Colombia, Peru, Ecuador and Bolivia and continue to show our support for our Andean neighbors and allow U.S. companies to continue investing in that region.

Mr. LEVIN. Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 5264, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

The title of the bill was amended so as to read: "A bill to extend the Andean

Trade Preference Act, and for other purposes."

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

COMMENDING ELDER HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS FOR SUPPORTING ELDER HIGH SCHOOL ALUMNI SERVING OUR NATION OVERSEAS

(Mr. CHABOT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CHABOT. Madam Speaker, a few years ago, I had the honor of coming to the floor of this House to congratulate Cincinnati's Elder High School for winning the Ohio State Division 1 football championship 2 years in a row, quite an accomplishment.

Today, I want to recognize and commend Elder High school seniors Matt Brannon and Ben Combs and a group of about a dozen fellow Elder students for doing something every bit as worthy of recognition. These young men, on their own initiative, raised the necessary funds to ship care packages to Elder alumni who are serving our Nation in uniform overseas. In the words of Matt Brannon, "I want to help people who are risking their lives for us."

Such patriotism should be an inspiration to us all, and Elder High School can be proud that they are educating and instilling in their students the highest values.

Thank you, Elder Panthers. Well done.

□ 1715

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. CONYERS addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

WHO SEEKS INDEPENDENCE?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. POE. Madam Speaker, it is written that governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, and that when any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it and to institute new government.

Madam Speaker, this eternal statement from the Declaration of Independence clearly states the United

States' right to self-determination. We used this natural right to break away from Great Britain.

Last week Kosovo unilaterally declared itself an independent and sovereign state, and the announcement has ushered violence in the region and opposition from the country it broke from, Serbia. Following Kosovo's declaration of independence, the United States was one of the first world powers to grant official recognition to the self-declared independent Kosovo. Since then, several other countries have followed. Of course, not everyone agrees that Kosovo may unilaterally declare its independence from Serbia. Certainly Serbia objects.

At the same time, Russia, China and Spain have shared their strong opposition to the declaration. Each of these countries is struggling with its own separatist communities. They are afraid that Kosovo's unilateral declaration will encourage secessionist groups in their own country to rebel and declare themselves independent and sovereign states.

When we start meddling in the internal affairs of international nations like Serbia, consequences are sure to follow. Let me be clear, I am not talking about a people rising up and overthrowing a civil government, but a people separating themselves from a civil government and forming a new nation.

The question is, do all peoples have this right of separation, and does the United States support that? What position will the United States take as other peoples may decide self-determination, separation and independence? By recognizing Kosovo, the United States is setting a precedent, and it needs to take that position very seriously, because there are consequences.

Is the United States willing to offer recognition to the Basque and Catalan people of Spain if they declare independence or to Chechnya if they break away from Russia? Or how about Tibet if they decide to leave China? Separatist communities across the world are interpreting the actions of the United States in Kosovo to suggest that America supports movements of self-determination.

A columnist for an African newspaper recently wrote a newspaper article titled "Kosovo—the precedent that will enflame Africa." This journalist predicts that the Kosovo recognition will ignite a revival of secessionist groups across the African continent. Will the United States be prepared to deal with that if it happens? And what will we do? Will we send troops? Will we send aid to these movements?

We've even got folks from the State of Montana here in the United States saying they are going to secede from the Union if the Supreme Court rules a certain way on gun ownership. Is self-determination allowed in Montana?

Looking at our country's history, it is pretty clear that the right of self-determination of a people is expensive,