

Reject Andean FTA

Support a New Model for Fair Trade

Rising trade deficits have cost 3 million actual and potential U.S. jobs since 1994. Our trade deficit in goods is historic: It is more than 16 times larger than it was 20 years ago, and has grown more than 600 percent in the last decade. Last year the United States imported more than \$450 billion more in goods than we exported, for a trade deficit of more than \$1.2 billion a day. Now, the Administration has completed trade deals with Peru and Columbia, and is planning to send them Congress packaged as an Andean Free Trade Agreement (AFTA). Enactment of the proposed AFTA would mean more of the same bad news for workers.

Just like NAFTA and CAFTA, AFTA lacks enforceable labor rights provisions. While the Administration has long argued that worker's rights can't be included in trade deals because our partners reject them, Peru's president suggested including workers' rights in the agreement. We must end the "race to the bottom" on worker's rights to ensure that good jobs are available in our communities and in the developing world.

Colombia is the most dangerous country in the world for union activists. While the labor provisions of these agreements are inadequate for any nation, they are especially troubling when applied to Columbia. Since 2001, more than 500 Colombian labor leaders have been killed for their union activity. In the last two years, an increasing number of unionists have been arrested, and the Colombian government has declared their strikes illegal.

The Andean agreements are the exact same failed NAFTA and CAFTA model – guaranteed to cost more good paying jobs, and give more power to corporations to use international trade tribunals to threaten domestic regulations that protect workers and communities. With ever rising trade deficits and more U.S. manufacturing jobs bound for low-wage countries, we can't afford any more NAFTA-like trade deals. It is time for a new model for to ensure that trade is fair to workers both at home and abroad.

Status:

The Administration could send a package of Andean FTAs to Congress later this year.

Boilermakers' Message to Representatives:

- Reject the Andean FTA and all other NAFTA-style trade agreements that undermine workers rights and threaten the sovereignty of our nation.
- Urge Trade Representative Rob Portman to pursue a new model for international trade that includes enforceable labor standards, fair and transparent investment provisions, and protections for domestic regulations that maintain healthy communities.